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RATIONS FROM THE GREAT WAR

J. W. W. MOERAN, M.A.

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ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM THE
GREAT WAR

Insert words marked in Index at end also texts at bot. of pages throughout

By
J. W. W. MOERAN, M.A.
Late Vicar of Salhouse-with-Wroxham, Norfolk
Author of
"Teaching by Illustration"

LONDON: ROBERT SCOTT
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With Reverent Admiration and Gratitude this Volume is

Dedicated

To the Memory of

ROLAND PERCEVAL GARROD
(Sec. Lieut. VIth Batt. City of London Rifles),

HAROLD FREDERICK COSENS
(Lieut. 1st East Yorks Regiment),

ROBERT HAROLD JERVIS JOHNSON
(Sec. Lieut. 2nd Batt. Essex Regiment),

JAMES DOUGLAS HERBERT FARMER
(Sec. Lieut. Royal Field Artillery),

Who Counted not Their Lives Dear to Themselves,
But on the Battlefields of France and Flanders
Gave Them up
For King and Country,
For Honour and Freedom.

"No man among us all can come out of this great war unaffected by it for good or ill. It is too stirring for that. It writes a new chapter in the life of every one of us. . . . When we recall it a few years hence, we shall find that, with all its stress upon every fibre of our life, and all its terribleness, and all its tragedy of sorrow, it has been fashioned by God into a chapter for good, and that our manhood and womanhood have emerged robuster and worthier from the fiery test. Whether that will be so or not depends upon how we bear ourselves."—The ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, *in his Easter message to the troops in France.*

PREFACE

THE contents of this volume are drawn from incidents and events in the Great War, which has now been in progress for more than twelve months—a year full of tragic occurrence and terrible sufferings.

From every part of the far-flung battle-lines come stories of heroic self-sacrifice and unselfish devotion to a noble cause, as well as tales of heartless cruelty and base violation of laws Divine and human. And from the Council Chambers of the nations engaged in this life-and-death struggle have emanated decrees of supreme moment for the destinies of the civilized world.

Many of these incidents and events, and also the unfolding to view of international ethics, contain some message or lesson of a religious or moral character, and may be used as illustrations of truths and principles which abide with us always.

In those years of peace which, before war broke out, many thought would never be interrupted in our time, objections were sometimes taken to the use of military emblems to illustrate the Christian life. Indeed they often seemed out of keeping with the ordinary experience of the soul's progress in

grace. Such hymns as "Onward Christian Soldiers" or "Hold the Fort" sounded like an anachronism when sung by the gentle, peace-loving folks who formed so large a majority of the worshippers in Church. But now we are able to understand and appreciate the force and fitness of those Pauline metaphors which gave birth to so many of our stirring martial hymns, and which also supplied preachers of the robust type with materials for "Straight talks to men" and illuminating pictures for Children's Services. There is now almost a danger of giving them an undue preponderance, to the exclusion of quiet imagery and restful parables. But that will right itself in time.

It has lately been said by some that, when people come to Church on Sunday, they do not want to hear about the war; they have read of hardly anything else during the week, and would rather have their thoughts, when in God's House, diverted to something different, more restful, and more cheering.

If the preacher only uses his opportunity to abuse the enemy, or to declaim facts and principles of humanity already enunciated by the Daily Press, or to excite the emotions of nervous people and make them depressed and fearful, there is good reason indeed for complaint and protest.

But, on the other hand, it should be remembered that people cannot get away from thoughts of the war. And, if the preacher is wise, he will endeavour to speak a word in season to those who need comfort in anxiety or bereavement, and also to others in whose minds the problem of "Christianity

and the War" has awakened grave doubts and misgivings about God's care, and the ultimate triumph of good over evil, and the life beyond, and the Day of Judgment. Where these things are, in their turn and in due proportion, wisely and lovingly dealt with by the Christian teacher, the hearts of those who listen will gratefully respond.

Never before has the Church had such a splendid opportunity of proclaiming her Master's message and showing how the love of God in Christ is the one hope of this sad world amid the clash and confusion of its rival interests. It is with the desire of helping in such efforts that I offer this contribution to the preacher's armoury. An apt illustration will often give point to the religious or ethical truth which needs to be driven home.

The whole narrative of military operations contains abundance of suggestive material for such a purpose. Naval episodes thus far have not been so largely forthcoming, owing to the secrecy which of necessity veils the splendid work of our gallant seamen.

Here and there I have put in some fact given in one or other of the many interesting and instructive books written on the War. I am indebted to the copyright holders of these works for their kind permission to print the extracts. In the case of each one I have acknowledged the names of author and publisher in the place where it appears.

Beyond these few, however, the incidents herein made use of have been taken directly from newspapers or magazines or private sources. Some

of them may have already been thought of by other minds; but most of them, I hope, will be quite fresh to those preachers and teachers who may think them worth using as a help in their ministry.

Foreign missions are perhaps more frequently and freely illustrated here than any other subject. This has not been done designedly; but has rather come naturally. The very magnitude of such a war and the intensity of its operations on a foreign soil are a continual reminder of the world-wide enterprise of the Church Militant in combating the spiritual forces of evil in lands of heathen darkness.

If I have anywhere allowed imagination to draw from realities more than sober judgment and reason can justify, may the Lord pardon such faultiness, and may He use whatever is good and true in these pages for the advancement of His Kingdom in the hearts of men.

J. W. W. M.

BACTON-ON-SEA, NORFOLK,
September, 1915.

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE GREAT WAR

1. The Advent.—Early in 1915 an American went through Belgium, in order to learn the true extent of its unhappy people's distress, and to see how the American Fund for their relief was being worked. He tells how he stopped at a farm-house, while a broken spring in his motor-car was being patched up. The farmer and his family had not fled from their country among the refugees who sought shelter in England or Holland, preferring to stay and guard their home. The farmer's wife was doing the week's washing in the yard. "When she found I was not a German, but a friend . . . she lifted her hand from the suds, and swung it out to the West, toward England and France, with an eager craving fire in her eyes, and then she swept it across in front of her as if she were sweeping a spider off the table . . . and she asked, 'When? When?' When would the Allies come and turn the Germans out?"

That same night he drove into Antwerp. A knot of people gathered around the car, as it stopped before a restaurant. Their faces asked the same question which (owing to the presence of the German patrols) the tongue dare not ask: "When?"

Everywhere it was the same longing desire—this eager expectation for deliverance from the cruel usurper of their national rights and for restoration to freedom from a hated yoke.

The whole world has been, since the original fall of man, invaded by sin. Satan still holds sway as a cruel tyrant over the souls of men. His power has been partly broken. Do we believe in a greater deliverance still, when Christ shall come the second time as the mighty Conqueror, to drive out the alien forces of evil, purging the earth of their presence, and leading His people into the joy of perfect liberty and complete restoration in the Heavenly Father's home? May the desire of all true hearts be: "When? When will He come with power and great glory?" "Even so come, Lord Jesus."

2. An Appeal to the Privileged.—Side by side in one of the rooms of the Royal Academy (1915) were hung two pictures: one entitled "The Hills and River at Bettws-y-Coed,[1] and the other "Homeless."[2]

The first of these, as the name indicates, presents to the eye one of the loveliest bits of scenery in North Wales—the trout-stream running between its grassy banks; the tree-clad hills rising in the near background; a cottage to which a cart-road leads; and on this road a group of people standing or sitting. It all looks so peaceful and safe and restful.

The other picture is made up of a small crowd

[1] By B. W. Leader, R.A. [2] By Richard Jack, A.

of Belgian refugees—old men and women; a younger woman carrying her baby; a boy with a basket on one arm and a garden hoe over his other shoulder leading the way; children, just able to walk, being helped on by older hands. Such a look was depicted on the faces of most as they thought of the ruined homes they had left behind and the scenes of murder and outrage and fiendish cruelty their eyes had seen. There was probably no special design in placing these two pictures side by side; yet the contrast between them was most striking and very suggestive. The one spoke of the land unsoiled and unhurt by the ruthless invader; the other told of the suffering and misery caused by his infamous violation of all the rights of a defenceless people to whom he had shown no mercy.

The two pictures together seemed to say to every Englishman who looked on them, "You have so much to enjoy and to be thankful for. You have been spared all that Belgium has endured. Be generous in your sympathy. Be true to your bond, by reinstating in their homes these people so cruelly injured. In their weakness they appeal to your strength, in their wrongs to your justice and sense of honour."

Furthermore, these pictures are representative, in the contrast they afford, of that which is permanent. Side by side in the great human family are always to be found these two—happiness and misery; riches and poverty; the sheltered and the homeless; those who have every advantage of Christian teaching and influence, and others

who have "never had a chance." It is by God's providence that they are so placed. It is His will that the suffering, degraded, homeless, outcast ones should be thought of, and relieved, and pityingly loved, and tenderly uplifted by the rich and strong and generous and happy.

3. The Bible—How to use it.—An English soldier, who was imprisoned at Döberitz, writing home to his wife, wanted to let her know that he was starving and that he would count on her being able to send him out some parcels of food. In order to escape the German censorship, he resorted to an ingenious device. In the course of an apparently cheery message he wrote, "I hope at Easter you read my favourite verse, Luke xv., verse 17."

His wife opened her Bible, and in the passage named she read, "And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger."

That man knew where to lay his finger on a verse in the Bible which exactly described his needy condition, and he used it as a plea for the help he was sure would be forthcoming. And herein we might learn from him a clue to guide us in our use of the Sacred Scriptures under the different conditions and higher needs of the soul. For each of us, at every stage of our spiritual experience, there is always some incident, or warning, or promise which we too might use as a plea for help in our approach to the Throne of Grace.

Turn, for instance, to the last verse of the 119th Psalm. "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments." That describes the condition of the man who knows he has wandered from the paths of righteousness and peace; he remembers God and longs to be reconciled, yet knows not how to find his way to the Father's heart; so he just confesses his sin, and cries out to the Good Shepherd to come and find him and bring His strayed sheep into the fold.

Or again, there is that most touching prayer, wrung by a sense of deep need from the tender heart of one in distress: "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief."[1] How many of us have sometimes found those words exactly express the need of our souls, when in the prison-house of unbelief, hungering for a clear strong faith to support us until the trial is over.

Like the British soldier interned in the prisoners' camp at Döberitz who used the Bible as the channel of his plea, let each one of us, in the hour of his need, plead before the Lord His own words, appropriating to ourselves those passages which express our personal necessities most fully.

4. The Bible—in Dark Days.—A company of the Fifth Yorkshires found themselves surrounded by the enemy during the battle of Ypres. They were much exhausted, having already been five days without any proper rest. They were not veteran

[1] St. Mark ix. 24.

soldiers, but young men fresh from England. Their captain was dead, and the lieutenant on whom the command now rested had been a schoolmaster until the war broke out. Their situation was critical; but they had no thought of surrender. Their leader took out his Bible and read aloud the 91st Psalm. How applicable were its words to their experience! "The noisome pestilence" was there in the poisonous gas employed by the enemy. "The terror by night" had been the great bursting shells and shrapnel that ceased not even during the hours of darkness. "The arrow that flieth by day" was more than matched by the deadly bullet fired at any head that showed itself above the rampart of the trenches. They saw "thousands falling beside them, and ten thousand at their right hand." This glorious Psalm of old, so rich in its promises of God's care and its assurances of answered prayers, was just what these sorely-pressed men needed to steady their nerves and inspire them with confidence and courage. Wonderful to relate, when the company was ordered to retreat, they were able to do so in such a way that not one of their number was left behind. "Never," said their officer in his letter home, "had we been nearer to disaster, although it has been 'touch and go' with us many a time since the war began."

Surely the Lord was in that place with them, and heard the silent prayers ascending from their hearts whilst His Word was being read aloud. And from Him came their great deliverance. Such a miracle, as we may call this, does not always happen. But

even the solitary instance, recorded here and there, proves that God is among His people still as of old, that He does honour those who honour Him in seeking for help and comfort from the old Book. Yea, as we read in the last verse but one of this 91st Psalm, "He shall call upon me and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honour him."

5. The Bible—Testimony of a great Soldier.—Many thousands of copies of the Gospel of St. John were sent out to the soldiers at the commencement of the War. Just inside the cover, at the beginning, was a letter from Lord Roberts, written a few weeks before his death. It was his message to the soldiers and ran thus: "I ask you to put your trust in God. He will watch over you. You will find in this little book guidance when you are in health, comfort when you are in sickness, and strength when you are in adversity."

ROBERTS, F. M.

6. Birds and Children.—A train full of Belgian refugees ran one evening into the station of a Southern Dutch town. Among the crowd of poor suffering bewildered people, rendered homeless by the "frightfulness" of German "Kultur," were two little boys, evidently brothers, the elder about five years old, the younger perhaps three. They held each other tightly by the hand, as if for mutual protection and comfort. No one claimed them, no one knew them. At last the elder, clasping the

little one's hand closely, as if fearing to lose him, said to the Red Cross lady who bent over him, "Madame, are they going to put us to bed soon?"

Very soon indeed were they both put to bed; and, nestling one against the other, fell into the profound sleep of innocent childhood.

The whole story is fully described in *King Albert's Book*[1] (p. 31) by Pierre Loti, who then goes on to write: "Once, long ago, in the China Sea, during the wars, two little frightened birds, smaller even than our wrens, arrived—I know not how—on board our ironclad, in our admiral's cabin; and all day long, though no one attempted to disturb them, they fluttered from side to side, perching on cornices and plants.

"At nightfall, when I had forgotten them, the admiral sent for me. It was to show me, not without emotion, the two little visitors, who had gone to roost in his room, perched upon a slender silken cord above his bed. They nestled closely together, two little balls of feathers, touching and almost merged one in the other, and slept without the slightest fear, sure of our pity. And those little Belgians, sleeping side by side, made me think of the two little birds lost in the China Sea. There was the same confidence and the same innocent slumber;—but a greater tenderness was about to watch over them."

Here is an argument from the less to the greater

[1] Edited by Hall Caine, and published for the *Daily Telegraph* Fund.

—from the lower to the higher. If the birds were safe, much more the children. Human love and pity are the guarantee of this. We may go one step farther and higher still. He Who puts into our hearts the love of children in their helpless innocence, Himself loves them with an infinite tenderness. Let fathers and mothers who are anxious about their little ones trust them, with prayer and hope, to the Heavenly Father. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without His knowledge. A little child is of more value in His eyes than many sparrows.

7. Boasting—and its Sequel.—At the Hague Convention (October 9, 1907), Baron Marshal von Bieberstein announced the principles upon which the German sailors would conduct maritime war. He said: "Military acts are not solely governed by stipulations of international war. . . . Conscience, good sense, and the sense of duty imposed by the principles of humanity will be the surest guide for the conduct of sailors, and will constitute the most effective guarantee against abuses. The officers of the German Navy, I loudly proclaim (*Je le dis à haute voix*), will always fulfil in the strictest fashion the duties which emanate from the unwritten law of humanity and civilization. . . . I cannot admit that there is any country in the world which is superior to my country or my Government in the sentiment of humanity."

There is a fearful irony in these words, when read to-day in the cold light of the sinking of the

Lusitania, Fallada and other passenger and merchant ships, whereby the officers and sailors of German submarines, acting on direct orders from their Government, deliberately murdered hundreds of non-combatant men, and also hundreds of women and children; and the whole of Germany shouted with fiendish exultation over the crimes, and applauded the submarine sailors for their "bravery!"

What are we to think of the boastful claims to a superior humanity made by Baron von Bieberstein? He may have spoken sincerely. If so, he only showed how little he understood the cruel nature of his countrymen.

We often make the same mistake when we think and speak vauntingly about some special quality of mind or heart on which we pride ourselves; fancying that we excel others therein.

Simon Peter fell under this delusion when he vehemently asserted that, though all men should deny his Lord, yet he never would. He little knew his weakness until he was put to the test and failed so sadly. Then he found himself out. It is only by experience that we learn how "desperately wicked" is the human heart. Let us carefully avoid self-glorification, both in thought and word. It is often just where we imagine ourselves to be strong that we are really weak. It was so with Simon Peter, and also with Germany's delegate at the Hague Convention. "Let him who thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

8. Bravery.—In the Military Hospital at Brighton

was a soldier who had returned from the fighting-line with a bayonet wound requiring an operation; after which he expected to return to the Front. He told a visitor who was conversing with him that he had once been in a terrible mine disaster. He was one of a party of twelve caught in a section of the Senghenydd mine when the explosion occurred. Ten of that little band died after much suffering. Only the young Welsh soldier and a boy were left. The heat of the fire crept closer. The soldier wrapped an overcoat he found round the boy to keep the heat from him and tied the sleeve across the boy's eyes so that they should not see the ten dead men. He turned his own back towards the fire until his skin was charred. He finished his narrative by saying, "I don't think I shall ever do anything as a soldier better worth the V.C. than giving the boy that overcoat."

Every soldier ought to be a brave man; but every man need not wait until he is a soldier before he can perform a brave deed. Those among us who cannot serve in the army may draw some consolation from this fact. Every man should be prepared to act with courage and in the spirit of self-sacrifice when some one else, weaker than he and dependent on him, is in danger. To all men surely there comes at least one such opportunity in their lives; to some it comes oftener. The great thing is to have enough self-confidence of the right sort to act with courage when the hour of opportunity is in our hands. There is a line in an old hymn, "Prayer makes the coward spirit brave."

That is absolutely true. There are thousands of men in the fighting-line to-day who are not brave by nature. But they have asked God not to let them shame their manhood in the hour of trial. And their prayer has been heard and answered. And so will ours be, if we ask in faith. Then, when the occasion comes, there will come with it the spirit to do the brave self-sacrificing act.

9. Business as usual.—The man who, in the early stages of the war, invented this phrase probably thought he had given his countrymen a good lead. But, after a while, people found they were wrong to use it. A growing sense of the greatness of the struggle and the knowledge of what our brave soldiers and sailors were going through, almost in sight of the English coast, made it seem callous to talk of "Business as usual"; and the phrase began to be dropped out of public usage as a thing to be ashamed of.

In the darkened homes of sin and sorrow near our own doors, and in the face of appalling cruelty and moral degradation in heathen and Mohammedan lands, valiant soldiers of the Cross are spending their lives in combating evil and suffering. And yet our churches are often thronged with complacent Christians, too easily satisfied with themselves, seeming to think it right that business and pleasure and all the interests which make up the sum of their lower life should go on as usual. As it was with the nation, so it is with the Church. So few people realize what it all means—this age-long war with

sin; the crafty devices of Satan and the strength of his opposition to those who are fighting for Christ against him. Those among us who have influence and knowledge might use the one and impart the other until the eyes of our most sleepy fellow-Christians are opened to see things in their true light.

Then they will be ashamed of the levity and self-seeking and pleasure-hunting of bygone days; and they will henceforward say, "Nothing as usual."

10. Caring for the Stranger.—A gunner of the Royal Field Artillery, named Frank Wilkinson, was mortally wounded in battle. He was carried into the hospital where he died. The Army Chaplain afterwards wrote a letter of sympathy to the lad's mother, who lived in Hull. He told her how good and brave and patient her son had been, how he always had a smile on his face, how he never forgot his prayers, and was trusting in our Lord Jesus Christ, when he peacefully passed away. The Chaplain went on to say: "He was buried next day. . . . As his coffin was being borne up the path, with the firing-party behind, a French lady was weeping beside a grave; but when she saw us coming, she picked every rose off the tree which grew upon it, and, stepping forward, placed them on your Frank's coffin. . . . They followed your son weeping in hundreds, and have kept his grave bright with flowers since."

What a comfort that letter must have been to the bereaved mother! She could not herself be

with her boy in his dying hours; but she would know that some one else had been there to soothe and comfort and strengthen him. He had not died alone. She could not follow his loved form to its last resting-place, there to lay flowers on his grave; but others had done that, and continued to do so, out of their wealth of kindness and sympathy.

Let no one ever miss the opportunity of ministering to the stranger when far from home, and alone, in life or in death. Such service might more often be rendered in the Master's Name to His little ones. And let those who are anxious about loved ones far away not fail to commit them in faith and hope to the Father of us all. And He will raise up friends for them—angels in human form perhaps—who will guard them with tender care and take the place of their nearest and dearest, as God's comforters in their hour of need.

11. A Challenge accepted.—"London Rifle Brigade, Belgium. The L.R.B. has gained laurels this last week through the act of a Corporal Jenkins, of No. 1 Company. The Germans put up their flag in defiance, fifty yards or so in front of their trench. Under cover of the early morning mist, Jenkins crept out, and at the risk of his life took the flag. The same man has already been mentioned in Despatches, and I should think he ought to get the D.C.M. for this last affair."[1]

[1] "From one of our boys."—Christ Church, Gipsy Hill Magazine, May, 1915.

Sometimes the enemy of human souls puts up the flag of defiance, by means of his agents and dupes in the trenches of Atheism, Freethought or Rationalism. It may be in the home, or the workshop, or the billets. It floats on the lips of the foul-tongued man, in the lewd conversation, the filthy joke, the blasphemous use of the holy Name of Jesus, the scoffing ridicule flung in daring challenge at the Bible, or the prayer-habit, or the Day of Judgment, or a Hell for the wicked, or a Heaven for the just. It needs a brave man to take down that flag; and to his courage he must often add prudence, caution and patience. The man who can do it, and in place of it unfurl the standard of a bold confession in Jesus Christ will not go without recognition or reward from the Captain of his Salvation.

12. Characters Refined.—"People in Russia are naturally kind. They have become even gentler since the War began."

These words were written by Mr. Stephen Graham, than whom no one probably knows better the heart and soul of Russia. His witness is borne out by others who tell us of the overflowing kindness and pity shown in Russian hospitals, not only to their own wounded, but to their Austrian enemies. It all means that the sorrows and sufferings of the nation have evoked what is good in their character and made it better still.

Is that the effect of trials on us—each one? It should be so; it is meant to be. Some natures,

however, are only hardened and coarsened to a greater degree by the discipline that is meant to be wholesome. Hardship, suffering and loss are a great test of faith. True gold is refined by the cleansing fires. Sometimes it needs to be purified seven times.

13. The Child and his Father.—In the streets of our cities and towns may often be seen, walking or running about, soldiers in miniature—so far, that is, as outward appearance goes—sturdy-looking warriors of two or three years old, and veterans of five and six. We have been disposed, perhaps, to discount this sort of thing rather severely. It has looked like a display of pride on the part of some foolish mothers. Some have said that its very ridiculousness is a sign of levity, a mark of disrespect for the serious calling of the real soldier and his splendid sense of duty and self-sacrifice, a waste of the precious material, every square inch of which is too valuable to be played with. But there is another side to it. And *The Times* has drawn attention to this, in a leading article,[1] entitled "Children in Khaki." There is in it more than parental vanity or humour. In the case of the older child he is often so dressed in response to his own urgent desire. He has learned to admire and respect his father, the almost middle-aged subaltern. He has caught something of the spirit of patriotism and its claims on each man; and he

[1] May 5, 1915.

wants to be in the movement. He asks to be enlisted, because he has some childish grasp of the reality and greatness of all that a soldier's uniform proclaims. In many cases, the wearing of the dress imposes a sense of chivalry, which makes the boy feel he must be brave, and not cry if he is hurt, nor be rude to his sisters or cruel to the cat.

All this has its analogy in the Christian life. When a child grows up in the atmosphere of a home where the spirit of Christ reigns, he will be affected by it, more or less, unconsciously. If his father is a true type of the manly Christian—brave and firm, gentle and thoughtful, courteous and unselfish, not ashamed to confess Christ in his home and outside it—his children will want to be like him. They will catch by infection the enthusiasm of his love for goodness and purity and honour. They will want to show it in their own childish way by some act in imitation of their father's creed. Where this is so, let the child be encouraged to carry on the traditions of the life that is lived before his eyes.

14. Chivalry.—A party of Russian soldiers were ordered to blow up a bridge on the Carpathian front. When the mine was almost due to explode, an old peasant-woman was seen to be approaching. The men shouted and fired their rifles in the air so as to attract her attention and warn her of the danger. But, being deaf, she could not hear, and continued her perilous course unmoved. Then the Corporal, disregarding the explosion which

might occur at any moment, ran at full speed, waving his hands, until she stopped. Then seizing her, he lifted her on to his back, and ran as fast as possible away from the bridge. When the explosion took place, it knocked them both over, covering them with dust and splinters, but neither of them was hurt. Afterwards the officer in charge asked the man, "Did you not realize that you were running to almost certain death? What made you risk your life for that old woman?" The brave Cossack replied, "All I thought of was that I had an old mother at home; and that made me go without thinking of anything else at all."

There was a fine instinct in that man's nature. Would that it were universally felt and always acted on! Then whenever we saw any one in danger or difficulty or temptation, the feeling of some holy affection would assert itself, and we should only think, "That is my mother, or father, or sister, or brother;" and self would be forgotten, and the ridicule or enmity of others disregarded, and the act of chivalry would be performed, which would make the world a better place to live in, and bring heaven nearer to some souls.

15. Christianity and the War.—Right in the centre of one of the bloodiest fields of battle in Galicia, there is a crossing of the roads, and there still stands, as it has stood for perhaps a century, a tall wooden Cross, on which is a carved figure of the Christ. All through the day of fierce carnage, this Crucifix was there, the eyes of the Saviour

seeming to look down upon the wounded and dying men as they lay in agony on the ground.

"The top of the wooden upright was shattered with a bit of shell, while one arm of the figure of Christ was carried away by a shrapnel fragment. Could anything be more incongruous than this pathetic figure of Him, Who came to spread peace and good-will among men, looking down to-day on a field sown with mangled corpses?"[1]

There are some people who say, that this war proves Christianity to be a failure in the world; and they would doubtless point, in proof of this contention, to the moss-grown Cross with its carved figure of the Christ, standing there, impotent to stay the rage and passions of men killing each other, with no voice to cry aloud, "Sirs, Ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?"[2] powerless to heal the wounded and raise the dead to life again.

There is another and a truer way of looking on this field of blood. We may there see an object-lesson to illustrate the meaning of a great saying of our Lord, "I came not to send peace (on earth) but a sword." Those are hard words for many to understand. But the present war has revealed something of their deep significance. It has been called a struggle of civilization against barbarism. That is true; but it is much more; it is a conflict between good and evil, between Christ and Satan.

[1] *Field-Notes from the Russian Front*, by Stanley Washburn (Melrose), page 120 (with accompanying photograph).

[2] Acts vii. 26.

Christ came to "destroy the works of the devil." The Kingdom He would set up in the hearts of men is not of this world. Its foundations are laid on Righteousness, Justice, Love, Purity, Holiness. Its progress among the nations is therefore opposed by Satan. A godless "Kultur" is the devil's weapon to-day in the hands of a nation that would substitute its idolatrous worship of the cruel superman for the Gospel of Love and mutual good-will among the nations. The Galician battle-field was more than a struggle between two races of men for national supremacy. The conflict fought there, as in France and Belgium, was between two kingdoms—those of Christ and Satan. And only when men learn, all together, to kneel at the foot of the Cross, in self-abasement and repentance for sin, can they be reconciled to one another. This awful war shows, more than anything else in history has shown, how the world needs Jesus Christ.

16. Christian Nations and the War.—Archdeacon Westcott said[1]: "In a letter I have lately received from an English Bishop in Japan, he tells me that the Japanese are looking on at this war with intense interest. They are greatly struck by the fact that a Christian nation like ours can still be a patriotic nation. And they are mightily impressed, through the happenings of the war, with the truth of this further great fact, that civilization alone cannot save a nation. The hard

[1] In his annual Charge (1915) to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Norwich.

ruthlessness of German materialism has proved that scientific culture affords no guarantee of right conduct. They see that Religion has its place in a nation's life, and that the truly great nations of Europe are those—and those alone—for whom the teaching of Christ our Lord stands for much."

17. The Christian Religion—tested and proved.—In August, 1914, the Rev. B. G. Bourchier, Vicar of St. Jude's Garden Suburb, Hampstead, went out as chaplain under the Belgian Red Cross Society. He and two English friends[1] soon fell into the hands of the enemy, and were treated with shameful cruelty by the brutal German soldiers. Again and again their lives were spared as by a miracle, in direct answer, as they believed, to the prayers of friends at home. In making a public acknowledgment of this, on their safe return, Mr. Bourchier said: "On those different occasions, when death seemed so imminent, all my thoughts were subordinate to this one, What does God think of me? And," he went on to say, "when everything else had been taken away from us, with no friend near, desolate and half-starved in prison, what, do you think, remained? Nothing? Say rather Everything. God and our faith in Him remained. Nothing could destroy the peace which alone can come from God. And I have come back to say that the Christian Religion is indeed the grandest thing in the world; for, tested in the supreme

[1] Mr. and Mrs. Stobart Greenhalgh.

crisis of one's life, faith in our Lord has proved a strength surpassing the imagination of man—

> 'Oh, make but trial of His love,
> Experience will decide
> How blest are they and only they,
> Who in His truth confide.'"

18. The Church and the Common Foe.—When the news that the fortress of Przemysl with its garrison of 130,000 Austrians had surrendered to the investing Russian army[1] was made known to the British soldiers in the field, cheers were raised for Russia, which were carried along mile after mile of the British Front.

Those Russians were of a different race and language; but they had won a great victory over the same foe against whom we are fighting. They and we are united in one cause—the cause of freedom, justice and honour. That made our English soldiers rejoice in the Russian success as if it were there own.

We want to see more of this feeling displayed among Christian people. When we hear of any stronghold of Satan in heathen or Mohammedan lands yielding to the power of Christian truth, even though the victory be won by those who are not in outward Church membership with us, let us rejoice in their success as a triumph for the cause of the one Lord and Master we and they are both trying to serve.

[1] Some months afterwards, it was retaken by the Austro-German forces.

19. The Church at Home—Her Duty.—A British officer, whose work threw him much into contact with French troops, wrote home a very urgent plea, which was issued by the Press Bureau. The burden of it was the tremendous need there was of supplies to be sent out from the Home base. He went on to say: "France is giving all she has—all her men, all her national energies—towards maintaining her army in the field. Behind her stand the British resources. If you tell a Frenchman that a million or more men have been recruited in England since the beginning of the war, he is greatly impressed, astonished even, that voluntary efforts should have produced such a force. But if you tell him that the process of putting this army into the field must be slow, owing to the difficulty of producing rifles, guns, explosives and other necessaries, he is incredulous. . . . If a million men are willing to give their lives, are not the remaining millions prepared to give their labour, for a pittance if need be, to attain the end desired?"

But the supply was short, because some employers of labour seemed more anxious to "make their pile" than to raise their workmen's wages; and many of these men went on strike, spending their time and dissipating their strength in the public-house. All of these seemed oblivious of the fact that the war had to be fought, not only on the plains of France and Flanders, but in the workshops on the Clyde, in Sunderland and Newcastle.[1]

[1] C'est dans les ateliers de la patrie qu'on fait bonne et sure guerre a l'ennemi! Au moins n'en coûte-t-il pas une seule goutte de sang au peuple.—*Maxims of Napoleon.*

In the war being waged against Satan in heathen and Mohammedan lands some of the best and noblest of our sons and daughters are giving their lives "for Christ's sake and the Gospel's."

Behind them are the resources of the Church at home. How are we maintaining that army in the field? If they give their lives, how can we let them want and yainly plead for the material help they need so sorely? In each case where there is or has been failure, the reason is the same. We have not realized our share in the enterprise, our responsibility to meet the need, or the tremendous nature of the issues involved.

20. The Church Militant.—"A merely defensive army is a military nonenity. The British naval victories were all won hundreds and thousands of miles away from England—at Copenhagen, at Cape St. Vincent, at Lagos, Trafalgar, Abukir Bay, etc. That means the English did not think of matters naval what so many British think of matters military. They always believed in offensive warfare; they attacked the enemy outside the English Channel or the German Sea—in the Atlantic, in the Mediterranean and elsewhere. They were, in order to be efficiently defensive, in the first place effectively offensive. This is an old, old principle of all warfare."—Emil Reich (*Doctor Juris*).

If this last sentence expresses a truism (and who will question that it does?) then we are justified in applying the principle to the Christian Church. The past history of the Church all confirms the

importance and actual necessity of waging an offensive warfare—of carrying the war into the enemy's most distant strongholds. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," was our Divine Captain's last command on earth. The Apostles of the early Church obeyed Him, taking these words as their marching orders. And so they carried the standard of the Cross even to the most distant confines of the Roman Empire, and waged their holy conflict with the prince of darkness in these Islands of the West, until Pagan Britain became Christianized. Let us, in our day, act more vigorously than we have yet done, on the same principle. There are those who tell us that Foreign Missions are a mistake, and that all the efforts and energies of the Church Militant should be reserved for home defence and expended in combating the evils that sap our national life. Such men are disregarding the Lord's clear command, and are hindering the very object and purpose which they profess to cherish. A merely defensive Church is an ecclesiastical nonenity.

21. Coalition.—In the tenth month of the war, the Government of this country underwent a startling change. A Coalition Ministry was formed, its object being to unite men of all parties so as to prosecute the war with more vigour and success. It was to be the expression of the national unity and determination. It involved personal sacrifices on the part of many, compelling ardent politicians to renounce, for a time at least, schemes and ambi-

tions long cherished. At the same time it was clearly understood that this reconstruction of the forces of the State committed no one to a surrender or compromise of political purposes and ideals. But because the eyes of the nation had at length been opened to realize the tremendous strength and determination of our unscrupulous and implacable foe, it was felt by all that the whole resources of a united people must be employed, in order to put forth "the full strength, to the last ounce"[1] of the British Empire.

If the eyes of all Christian people were opened, so that they could see and understand the deadly character and terrible strength of the forces of evil arrayed against us, there would surely be a truce called to party divisions in the Church. And as the English Liberal Government invited the co-operation of the Opposition, and asked all political groups to lay aside partisanship and join them for the national safety and welfare, so might the historical Church of this land go a great deal further than she has ever gone before in the direction of making it possible for the Free Churches to unite with her in the common cause. It is a thorny question, requiring very careful handling. The difficulties are great, owing to the sincere convictions held so strongly by men who are one in the faith and love of Christ and yet differ materially on principles of Church discipline, the Christian Ministry and the Sacraments. But if only they could see all things in their true proportions, Coali-

[1] Mr. Bonar Law, M.P.

tion would be felt to be not only possible but a necessity. And if there were a more vivid realization of the strength of the common foe, a more intensely-felt hatred of sin itself, and a larger measure in all hearts of the love of God, this union of the Churches, commenced first at home, might become extended to a partnership or federation with some at least of the Christian Churches in other lands.

22. Comfort in Death—Needed.—I have just been looking at one of the most touching pictures[1] produced by this terrible War. It sets forth an incident on the battle-field which is thus described by a soldier at the front in a letter which appeared in the *Manchester Guardian*: "I stopped for a few seconds by the side of a German who was dying. He was in great pain, and when I asked what I could do for him he said, in a pathetic tone that went to my heart (he was able to speak in good English), 'Nothing, unless you would be so good as to hold my hand until all is over.' I gave him my hand and stayed to the end. It seemed to comfort that poor chap a lot."

Does not this show how the human heart craves for sympathy in its hour of need? And also how the felt-need of sympathy on the one side and the conscious power on the other of having it to give, breaks down all the barriers of race and enmity? The man who would choose to die alone stands almost alone in human experience. Death is robbed of half its terrors and its pain by the pressure of a

[1] In the *Sphere*, February 13, 1915.

hand strong yet tender, and by the sound of a voice to soothe with the accents of a loving compassion.

When the shadows of that night are closing in around you and me, may One stand by, better than the truest of merely human friends; more loving than the most tender-hearted mother, wife, or child. There is no hand like the Hand of Jesus, no voice like His, speaking to the soul, to impart strength and comfort.

> "In death's dark vale I'll fear no ill
> With Thee, dear Lord, beside me;
> Thy rod and staff my comfort still,
> Thy Cross before to guide me."

23. Comradeship.—A correspondent of the American Press wrote a graphic account of a night he spent in the British lines after the victory of Neuve Chapelle. Our soldiers were just settling down into their new quarters there. "My host in the British breastworks," he said, "was a captain who, on the previous day, had received a bullet through the arm, and though officially reported wounded, had remained on duty with no bed except a rubber sheet laid on the wet earth. . . . When I noticed that he had no blankets in his dug-out, he explained that the men's blankets were not up yet, and he wanted to enjoy no luxury that they lacked."

This incident is typical of many such. The average British officer cares for his men, studies their health and comfort, and voluntarily shares in their hardships and privations. And the average

British soldier will follow such leaders anywhere, and will die for them, often freely risking his own life on the battle-field for the officer he has learned to love as well as trust. There is a fine spirit of comradeship about all this.

Why should there not be more—much more—of the same spirit, in our dear Homeland in the day of peace? There is far too little sympathy between the classes in our midst. There is not between the rich and poor enough of that mutual good understanding which is brought out in the presence of a common danger and common suffering. If the rich man refused to indulge in luxury because his poorer neighbour had to go without, he would often be none the worse for it in the end, and the poor man would not be moved to envy him. Better far than any form of Socialism is the Spirit of Christ our Elder Brother, drawing together all classes as He does, in the bonds of a common Brotherhood. True for all time is that old aphorism of Divine Revelation, "The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the Maker of them all."[1]

24. Confessing Christ as King.—During the German occupation of Belgium, numbers of people wore in their button-holes a portrait of King Albert. An order was issued that the King's portrait should not be displayed; but the next day it was as conspicuous as ever. A German officer entered a shop to buy a cigar. Seeing the King's portrait on the

[1] Proverbs xxii. 2.

walls, he exclaimed: "Don't you know that is forbidden?"

"Yes, Monsieur," was the reply.

"Then why do you still keep it up there?"

"Because," the woman answered, "I love my King. Don't you love your Kaiser? You wouldn't love him any the less if he were in trouble, would you?" Her courage won the day. The officer left the shop without further comment.

The Belgian people by the very action of their King had been brought under the iron heel of a ruthless invader, from which they suffered untold miseries. They knew all this. But they also knew that their King had saved them from national dishonour; and they held the firm conviction that he would yet return to his own and reign gloriously over them. They loved him with a passionate loyalty, which neither the threats nor ridicule of the tyrant oppressor could quench. They must show their loyalty by some outward symbol; and they did so by wearing their King's portrait.

Jesus Christ is our King. He Himself has never brought even temporary sorrow on His people. And yet the irreligious cynical world, that knows Him not, tries to make the Gospel of His Incarnation, Atonement and Resurrection a thing to be despised and rejected. All those who know Him truly as He is cannot but love Him as their King, even though in this present life they have often to endure persecution for His sake. And all who are loyal in their love will feel constrained to confess Him before men. There are many ways of doing

this: the best is to have His likeness (engraven first upon the heart) displayed outwardly in the life and character, so that it cannot be hidden from the eyes even of His enemies.

25. Conscience.—When the *Lusitania*, *Fallada*, and other ships were torpedoed by German submarines, and many hundreds of men, women and children plunged into a watery grave, German apologists sought to justify the deeds and to vindicate the murderers by saying that they were "heroes," only "obeying orders."

Commenting on one of these "unpardonable crimes against humanity," a Swedish newspaper[1] wrote: "It is difficult to understand how an officer of the German navy could consent to perform such an act." We may add that were such an order given by the British Admiralty, no officer could be found to execute it.

And why is this so? It is not enough to reply that the Germans are a cruel race and we are not; that they recognize no laws of chivalry and honour, whereas we drew the sword in defence of both. That is only half the answer. A truer reason may be found in a speech made in the House of Lords by the late Earl Roberts, on July 6, 1914. He was defending our Army against criticism, because some of its officers had resigned their commissions rather than obey an order to take positions in Ulster which seemed intended to provoke Civil War. Lord Roberts said: "Any attempt to use our

[1] The *Nya Daglit Allehanda*, May 8, 1915.

military forces for the coercion of Ulster will break and ruin the army. . . . Discipline is, after all, an artificial bond; and if you penetrate deep enough into the depths of human nature, you will unfailingly reach in each one of us a stratum which is impervious to discipline or any other influence from without. The strongest manifestation of this truth lies in what men call Conscience—an innate sense of right and wrong. . . . It was apparently in contemplation to make a demand of our soldiers at which the consciences of many revolted. . . . Then discipline became powerless to make them take the lives of their fellow-citizens and fellow-subjects."

In the British navy also, as in the army, conscience is always a living force. It is allowed no place by the system of militarism enforced in Germany. The powers of a military Pope are claimed by the Kaiser as First War Lord. Conscience in both his army and navy is crushed out of existence by a remorseless discipline. But conscience is the voice of God speaking within the heart. It is an awful thing for a nation, by its rulers, to renounce conscience for "necessity." It is equally dreadful for the individual to disclaim any allegiance to the voice of God within, under the plea of obeying orders which he knows to be a violation of the laws of God.

Let no presence of a strong temptation ever induce any one to outrage this sacred possession of each man—his conscience. "For we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body,

according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."[1]

26. Conscience and Guilt.—On May 8, 1915, the civilized world was horrified to learn that the Cunard liner *Lusitania* was torpedoed without warning by a German submarine off the south coast of Ireland. She had a complement of nearly 2,000 souls on board, including crew and passengers. Of these 1,198 were drowned.

Before she left New York, an advertisement was put in a number of American newspapers, cautioning travellers against sailing in ships flying the flag of Great Britain or her Allies, adding that such persons travelled at their own risk. This notice was issued in the name of the Imperial German Embassy, Washington. Besides this, many intending passengers on the *Lusitania* received private telegrams to say that the ship would be torpedoed.

When the German Embassy was asked why it had issued the warning advertisement, this reply was given: "We did it to ease our conscience, lest harm should come to persons misinformed." But was Germany thereby exonerated from the charge of doing a hideous act of outrage? A murder is no less a murder, because warning of the crime is given.[2] The German Embassy only adver-

[1] 2 Cor. v. 10.

[2] "It is constantly proved in humbler cases of homicide that the murderer declared, 'I'll do for him'; but that has never saved the culprit from the gallows."—*Lord Rosebery.*

tised the complete indifference of their Government to the laws of God and man. Pontius Pilate "took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." But posterity has not accepted the sentence of acquittal pronounced by the Roman Judge upon himself. Nor is the civilized world more likely to forgive the German Admiralty for their wholesale murder of innocent men, women and children.

Sometimes when men perpetrate acts of fraud upon the public, they try to ease their conscience by the endeavour to shield from harm some of the possible victims of their unprincipled conduct. They are callous about the ruin they bring upon others, outside the circle of these favoured few. They may acquit themselves in their own sight; but when they stand before the Judgment-seat of Christ, they will find themselves held responsible for all the wickedness they have wrought against the victims of their greed and selfish ambitions.

27. Conscience and Service.—After a month spent among our soldiers at the Front, Bishop Furse[1] came home full of enthusiasm for the splendid spirit they displayed. He was specially struck by their amazing cheerfulness, which was in contrast with the attitude of the people at home. In a letter to *The Times*[2] he said: "To-day the right spirit is lacking because the conscience of the nation is uneasy. . . . We are afraid of having a really

[1] Of Pretoria. [2] May 25, 1915.

healthy laugh; somehow we feel it would not be right. People are getting gloomy and depressed, not because they have any fear as to the ultimate end of the war, not because they are not ready to face, and face gallantly, the sacrifices which war has laid upon them, but because their consciences are not at rest. You cannot have the right spirit if your conscience is uneasy. That is why the men at the Front have the right spirit. They are so gloriously cheery because their consciences are at rest. They know they have done and are doing the right thing. They have made the great surrender. They have burnt their boats behind them and put themselves under orders. Nothing matters except to 'do their bit' when they are told to."

It is the same always and everywhere. So long as we hold back from God what we owe to Him in the way of service or money for the spread of His truth in the world; so long as we refuse to respond to the call of our Church, or our country, or those of our fellow-men who are suffering while we can help—so long shall we have the uneasy conscience which excludes peace of mind. On the other hand, when the voice of conscience prevails and the great surrender each one is called on to make in some way or another is fully made, then, and then only, shall we know true happiness; for we shall enjoy the approval of a good conscience—God's voice speaking peace within.

28. Controversy.—Mr. Ben Tillett, the Labour leader, went over to France to visit the fighting-

line so as to see things for himself. On his return he said, "I never realized what it was going to be like at all, but I have learnt my lesson from my visit to France. I have learned now that there is another meaning to the word 'strike'. We've got to STRIKE now, and every ounce of British grit, of British energy, of British gold, of British brain has got to be behind the blow."

Henceforward with him, there were going to be no more disputes between British employers and British workmen, until the common foe of both who, with devilish devices, was slaughtering and poisoning their brothers, was beaten and crushed.

If Christian men, who quarrel at home about the small differences that often divide them, could get into the very front of the battles that are being waged by other Christians against the frightful miseries of sin, and see them storming the strongholds of Satan in the slums and alleys of our great towns and cities, they would put another meaning into many a word. They would learn to "FIGHT the good fight of Faith" not against one another in the way of religious controversy, but unitedly, against the devil himself, until his power was broken and deliverance brought to those who need help in their conflict.

29. Courage in Prayer.—A non-commissioned officer writing home said: "It requires a good deal of courage for a man to go down on his knees and pray in full sight of thousands of his comrades. Yet I saw this happen, and the incident was the forerunner of many similar scenes."

The man who prayed in that way felt his need of God. He believed God was there and could help him; and also that He would do so, if He were asked. In the full consciousness of that conviction everything else looked small. Others might laugh in derision, but God would smile in approval. As a matter of fact, few probably did laugh; more than likely, many were moved to pray in secret; and then the example of open prayer and a fearless acknowledgment of God followed.

This is the spirit that is needed everywhere—in Parliament, in the home, in the office, and in the workshop. It requires courage—the courage of strong convictions—and also a buoyant faith. But these two never fail in their reward. For the nation and the individual man alike the promise is true, "Them that honour Me I will honour,"[1] saith the Lord.

30. Courage and Faith in Prayer.—A young British soldier was travelling "somewhere in France" with a number of other men in a railway truck. The language of the men was so bad that, in his distress and feeling his utter helplessness to stop them by anything he might say, he was compelled to kneel down and pray silently. There came a hush over the men; and when he rose to his feet the leader apologized for his conduct and that of the others. Surely he had the wisdom given him to do the right thing, and God honoured him for his moral courage and the faith which

[1] 1 Sam. ii. 30.

moved him to cast himself on the Lord for help. So God gave him the victory, making him "more than conqueror."

If all true Christians were constrained by such a faith as his, and would show the moral courage he displayed, wonderful indeed would be the results.

31. Courage in High Places.—At a critical time for Serbia in the history of the war, her King went to the Front. He was over seventy years of age, deaf, and crippled with gout.

Addressing his soldiers, he said: "Heroes, you have taken two oaths, one to me your King, and the other to your country. I am an old broken man, on the edge of the grave, and I release you from your oath to me. From your other oath no one can release you. If you feel that you cannot go on, go to your homes, and I pledge my word that, after the war, if we come out of it, nothing shall happen to you. But I and my sons stay here."

The response was electrical: not a man left. Courage, like panic, is infectious. If an army is to be victorious, its leaders must set the example of fearlessness and self-sacrifice. This is true under all circumstances. It is so of that moral courage, which is as necessary for the Church Militant as it is for an army in the field. What the Church needs in this as in every age, is that men, occupying high positions, should also hold strong convictions, and have the courage to avow them—men who will come forward in a crisis, when the forces of rationalism or materialism are striking at the truth

of revelation, and will say to the rank and file of the Christian army, "We are all soldiers of the Cross; this is no time for showing a half-hearted allegiance to our Heavenly Master. We, at all events, declare our fixed purpose to be loyal to Him under Whose standard we have enlisted."

32. Covered—in the Day of Battle.—"I have had the strangest Easter Sunday in my life. The battalion were fortunate enough to be in rest over the Festival, and arrangements were made for services in an old barn. The chaplain announced that he would celebrate the Holy Communion, and about twenty of us remained behind. Imagine it! . . . An ordinary table, of crude pattern, covered with a fair linen cloth; rude forms resting on a floor partially covered with straw and chaff; a military guard warming themselves at a fire just outside the door; a few soldiers assembled together, realizing the fulfilment of a promise that He would be in the midst. I have never enjoyed a service so much. We sang 'Jesu Lover of my Soul.' How I love that hymn! Many a time as we walked up the ruined way to the trenches have I sung it, just softly inside. Nobody realizes the meaning of 'Cover my defenceless head' like the boy marching, trudging on with the bullets 'pinging' overhead or 'plopping' into the mud underfoot. This life makes one think. . . . Never out of range of the guns, and never knowing when a mass of metal is on its way to hurl a section into eternity. Then it is that speculation goes by the

board, and the small doubts disappear in the magnitude of realizing that there is nothing in the whole world to assist or protect, save faith in a loving God. Then it is that one realizes the great defencelessness, and the fact that there is *no other cover*.

"We just had the simple service, and I came away refreshed. May it ever be so."

This is an extract from a letter from the Front received by a family of Church-people in Liverpool. What a grand thing it is to have the faith which upholds a man like that!

In the same spirit of happy confidence, another soldier wrote home: "I often think of those words which seem so true now—

> 'Not a single shell can hit
> Unless the God of Love sees fit.'"

33. Criticism.—"It is a great deal easier to criticize than to fight in the trenches."

These words were spoken at a public meeting[1] by Sir John Simon, the Home Secretary. How very true they are! There are people who cannot (or will not) themselves fight for their country; they have no responsibility; they are quick to notice mistakes in those who have, but are slow to recognize their difficulties; necessarily they are ignorant of much that goes on. And yet they will find fault, and impute base motives, and fling scornful words at those who are doing their best either in the fighting-line or at the home-base.

The same thing happens among Christian people

[1] At Leyton, July 10, 1915.

in regard to the work of the Church. There are those who never open their lips to say a word for the honour of our Lord and the truth of the Divine Revelation; yet they will criticize the sermon, even though the preacher does his best to make known the Evangel of love and the power of the Cross to save. They do not hesitate to endorse the objections of unbelievers against foreign missions, ignoring our Lord's great command, and belittling those brave men and women who have given up home comforts in obedience to that command and out of love for those who have never heard of Jesus and the love of His Father.

There have always been critics, and there always will be. The Scribes and Pharisees have, in every age, those who unconsciously imitate them. Criticism sometimes is good and useful. But in time of war, if it weakens the hands of the National Government, it proportionately strengthens the confidence of the enemy. Even so does the thoughtless criticism of self-satisfied Christians, directed against those who are doing the real work of our Lord, hinder the efforts of the Church and play into the hands of the devil.

34. The Cross—its Comfort in Death.—During a bayonet charge in Flanders, a British officer fell mortally wounded. His orderly afterwards found him alone and dying. The officer asked the soldier if he thought he could say a prayer for him. "I'm afraid that isn't in my line, sir," said the man. Then, by a happy inspiration, he remembered some-

thing, and said, "I have got a little cross my mother gave me; will that help you, sir?" The officer took the cross from his hand, and looking on it, murmured, "Hold Thou Thy Cross before my closing eyes"; and so he died.

In that outspoken desire for God, and in the simple act of faith which followed, is an object lesson better worth learning than many a whole volume of theology can teach. And the great value may also here be seen of those precious hymns which lead the soul to Jesus and His Cross for salvation. Probably the remembrance of a hymn he had listened to and joined in singing in some country church long years ago came back to that poor dying soul and helped his lips to frame the words of prayer that satisfied his heart.

35. The Cross: A Resting-place.—In one of the illustrated papers appeared a photograph taken in Northern France, during the early weeks of the war. Just off a country road stands a wayside Calvary—a great Cross with the form of the Saviour affixed. A Belgian cavalryman, who had been cut off from his regiment and had lost his way among the lanes of a strange country, finds there at last a resting-place. While his horse is browsing beside him, he leans against the foot of the Cross, under the figure of the Crucified.

What a picture is there—of the soul, lost from God, weary of earth and all it has to give, finding its true resting-place at Calvary! There to receive cleansing from its sins, refreshment for its weariness,

strength to pursue its journey and fulfil its duties, with new hopes of safety and peace and Heaven.

36. The Day.—One of the finest cartoons drawn for *Punch*[1] by the pen of Bernard Partridge was entitled "Wilful Murder?" The Kaiser is seated by a table, leaning back in his chair. One hand is laid on the hilt of his sword; the other is stretched aloft, holding a brimming goblet. He has just commenced in the words of that historic German toast—"To the Day——." But, at his elbow, unseen hitherto by him, stands the gaunt figure of Death. He too holds aloft in his right hand a goblet stretched out towards a gibbet with its dangling rope in readiness erected not far away. The bony fingers of the spectre's left hand are clutching the wrist of the Kaiser's outstretched arm, and, with stern gaze fixed on the culprit, he fills in the rest of the sentence—"of Reckoning."

For every wicked man, from the Emperor to the labourer, whether it be murder or some crime of lesser degree that he is guilty of, a day of reckoning will surely come. The penalty may not be exacted in this life. If not, it is only postponed; for the Word of the old Book will always stand true and firm—"After death the Judgment."

37. Dead Seas.—Speaking at a public meeting in Cardiff on June 11, 1915, Mr. Lloyd George, as the newly-appointed Minister of Munitions, made an earnest appeal to employers and workmen alike

[1] May 19, 1915.

to place their factories and labour at the disposal of the State for War purposes. He said, "There was a famous historic personage who once turned back and was converted into a pillar of salt, and tradition in the district says that the fact is responsible for the Dead Sea. Whether that is true or not, believe me, if Britain turns back on this journey and on this task, she will become nothing but a 'Dead Sea' among the nations."

Here is an old illustration in a new setting. It may be applied equally well to Churches as to nations. The words of warning uttered by our Lord to the Seven Churches of Asia, as recorded in the early chapters of the Book of Revelation, proved sadly true. In the course of a few years each of them turned its back on the Divine Commission received, renouncing the glorious privilege of spreading throughout the East the glad tidings of the Gospel. Then the river of life ceased to flow through them; and each in turn became a "Dead Sea" among the Churches. The same thing —without harshness be it said—is true of the great Western Church whose seat is in Rome. The decay of religion in more than one European country to-day shows Roman Catholicism to be a "Dead Sea" there.

Let us, who are proud of our historical national Church, take heed unto ourselves, lest we fall into the same sad condition. We have to-day such opportunities as we may never have again. The call, both at home and from every corner of the Mohammedan and heathen world, is urgent, and

the means put into our power by God are beyond human calculation. If we, as a people, yield to the demands of a materialistic age or the seductive pleasures afforded by wealth, and turn our backs on our Lord Jesus Christ and His great commission to evangelize the world, we shall become nothing but a "Dead Sea" among the nations of Christendom.

38. Death—Unprepared for.—A private in the 4th Grenadiers, writing home, said: "In one of our rearguard actions, an officer was saying to me, 'I am not good enough to die yet.' He had scarcely spoken the words, before he was shot through the brain, and the man on the left had his head blown off by a shell. You know I wasn't severely religious, but I'm inclined to be so now."

We admire and love our soldiers for their courage and devotion to duty; and we who stay at home, while they are giving their lives for us, are not qualified to judge those among them who do not seem to be religious. We may safely commit them to the tender mercies of Him Who alone knows the hearts of all. In more cases than we can ever tell, the man who is too shy to confess Christ believes on Him in his heart and is humbly trying to walk in His blessed steps. And the very man who says, "I am not good enough to die yet," may be quite prepared in the sight of God. But every one who reads or hears a story like that of the Guards officer, should take himself to task seriously and ask of his own heart and conscience, "Am I fit to die yet, if the call should come?" Delays are dangerous,

when a man hears the voice of God calling on Him to repent and believe in Christ, and yet puts off his decision until "a more convenient season." Let us all be more faithful; and while we forbear to pass sentence on any one else, we should make no excuse for ourselves. Some delays are worse than dangerous; they prove fatal to the life of the soul.

39. Deceived.—The s.s. *Dixiana,* bound from Savannah to Havre, with a cargo of cotton, was passing Ushant on May 28, 1915, when her captain observed what looked like a small craft with her sails up. Suspecting no harm, he continued his course, until from the innocent-looking sailing-boat a shell was fired which struck his ship. Beneath those spread sails was a German submarine, intent on the destruction of merchant shipping.[1] Too late was the real nature of this crafty foe of humanity discovered. After eight shells had been received into the hull of the *Dixiana,* a torpedo from the submarine sank her.[2]

There are men in ordinary life, like that submarine. To all outward appearance they are harmless, seeming to be occupied like other folk in the usual business and routine of a useful life.

[1] The same device was successfully practised by a German submarine which torpedoed the trawler *Strathbran* off the Pentland Skerries, on the night of June 3, 1915.

[2] Two days later, her captain and crew of twenty-six hands were picked up in their boats by the Greek s.s. *Zanos Sifneos.*

They are pleasant in manner, hearty of speech, sometimes even pretending to be religious. But beneath the outward veneer of a smooth tongue and a frank bearing there beats a heart full of wicked thoughts. The real man in his private life is known only to a few, like-minded with himself. ~~He is but a "whited sepulchre" after all.~~ Woe be to those who are deceived by him! When too late perhaps, his real nature is discovered. His only purpose is to prey on innocence and to destroy virtue.

40. Deliverance from Danger.—The Paris *Liberté* of November 17, 1914, records a brilliant feat of arms by an English detachment of eighty soldiers, near Ypres. The battle of November 11 was at its maximum of intensity, the day being considered by many combatants one of the most terrible of the campaign. This detachment found itself isolated with no possibility of rejoining its regiment. When night fell, the men obtained refuge and shelter in a little wood. The officer in command addressed them, showing them how completely they were surrounded by the enemy, with no chance of breaking through; but adding, "I am sure you will meet bravely your fate, and defend your liberty to the last. Now let us rest until the morning." They did so, stretching themselves quietly on the ground, without a word or sign of fear. At dawn a violent fusillade broke out near the wood. Profiting by the previous darkness, the Allies had advanced, and were vigorously attacking the German lines. An inspiration seized the Major of

the detachment. "Lie down men," he said, "and don't fire until I give the order." Then at the right moment, he gave the word of command, "Fix bayonets—charge." His men responded with splendid spirit, throwing the enemy into confusion. Not knowing the strength of the adversary who had from so unexpected a quarter attacked them, the Germans threw down their arms, and surrendered to the number of 400.

Sometimes, in its conflict with adverse circumstances, the soul is beset by doubts and difficulties almost to the verge of despair. And then some reassuring command or comforting promise is remembered and laid hold of. With the dawn of a new day some unexpected door of hope is opened; fresh opportunities present themselves; and instead of defeat and disaster, safety is found and victory is won. "Be strong and of a good courage." "Rest in the Lord." "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

41. Devotion to Duty.—In describing the splendid work done by our brave airmen, an "Eye-witness" wrote: "The raid on Courtrai[1] unfortunately cost the nation a very gallant life, but it will live as one of the most heroic episodes of the war. The airman[2] started on the enterprise alone in a biplane. On

[1] April 26, 1915.

[2] Lieutenant W. B. Rhodes-Moorhouse, of the Royal Flying Corps. He was only twenty-seven years of age, and left a young widow and little son. The Victoria Cross was awarded as a posthumous honour to him.

arrival at Courtrai he glided down to a height of 300 feet and dropped a large bomb on the railway junction. While he did this, he was the target of hundreds of rifles, of machine guns, and of anti-aircraft armament, and was severely wounded in the thigh. Though he might have saved his life by at once coming down in the enemy's lines, he decided to save his machine at all costs, and made for the British lines. Descending to a height of only 100 feet in order to increase his speed, he continued to fly and was again wounded, this time mortally. He still flew on, however, and, without coming down at the nearest of our aerodromes, went all the way back to his own base, where he executed a perfect landing and made his report. He died in hospital not long afterwards."[1]

It was a noble instance of devotion to duty—of utter self-forgetfulness in serving King and country. Let every story of the kind not only stir within us a transient feeling of admiration, but also move within us the ambition to be more faithful and the fixed purpose that, with the help of God's grace, in self-forgetfulness, we will always do our duty—at whatever cost—in the Cause of our divine King and on behalf of those whom we are sent to serve.

42. Dishonoured.—By the King's command, on May 15, 1915, eight names were struck off the Roll of "Knights of the Most Noble Order of the Garter." These included the German Emperor, the Emperor of Austria, the German Crown Prince

[1] See also No. 44.

and five other German Princes and Dukes. This was done because they were deemed unworthy to belong to the most famous Order of Chivalry in the whole world. Not until the war had run a course of nearly ten months was this conspicuous dishonour done to their names. Then the banners, surcoats, helmets and swords belonging to them were removed from St. George's Chapel. This was done, not because their countries were at war with us, but because they had disgraced their knighthood. "Heresy, Treason, Cowardice" are the three crimes which render a Knight liable to this degradation. In their names and (in the case of the German Royalties at least) by their command, these three and many other unpardonable crimes had been committed. They are guilty of "Heresy," because they are false to the teaching of Christ, abjuring the laws of mercy and loving-kindness, and in their place substituting the atrocious maxims of a brutal and intolerant militarism. They have committed "Treason," because they have violated the written pledges by which they were bound to other nations, treating them as "scraps of paper." And surely it is "Cowardice" to attack and murder indiscriminately, on land and sea, defenceless men, women and little children.

Would that all men holding, in their various degrees, positions of public honour and trust were allowed to retain their places only so long as they proved worthy of them! But, in some towns and country districts, municipal dignity or social honours are obtained by men who do not deserve the

public confidence or respect. They may have had a noble ancestry, or they may hold lands and wealth; but these are the only claims they can put forward. Wherever it can be shown that a man's private life and character are stained by vice or by any dishonourable practice, he should be removed from his high place. And if the same principle were applied, without fear or favour, to candidates for Parliamentary honour, what a blessing it would be for the nation! Then statesmen would vote according to their conscience, not in abject obedience to the orders of their Party Whips. Then titles could not be bought by the subscriptions of rich men to Party funds.

When—if ever—the stern just morality of the Old Testament and the clear pure teaching of the Sermon on the Mount are received by men everywhere as from God Himself, then the national conscience will insist that only men of truth and honour can hold in their hands the destinies of the people. And if their delegates prove false to such a confidence, they should be degraded from their office.

43. Do your Best.—A little girl aged seven, named Muriel Porte, forwarded to General Sir Douglas Haig a quantity of mittens, handkerchiefs and Christmas cards, from the Infant Department of the Belfast Model School, for distribution among the troops under his command. Sir Douglas wrote a letter of cordial thanks to her and the other children who had joined her in this gift. He said, "I am very much touched at what you say in your

letter, 'That you are so small that you cannot do much to help, but you have done your best.' That is a splendid spirit. One cannot do more than one's best, can one? I very much hope that every one in the British Empire will also do his or her best to help, because then the war will soon be brought to a successful end."

We know how true that is. Do we also know and believe that the same principle holds good in the great conflict that never ceases between the Kingdom of our Lord and the forces of His enemy and ours—Satan the prince of evil in the world? If every Christian man, woman and child did what they could for the spread of the Gospel on earth, the conquest of right over wrong would soon be assured. Then, in the Life Beyond, how lovely for each one to hear from the lips of the Captain of our Salvation these words, "Well done."

44. Dreams and Reality.—Second Lieutenant Rhodes-Moorhouse, of the Royal Flying Corps, died of wounds received after a very gallant action.[1] His body was brought home and buried in the grounds of his father's residence, Parnham House, Netherbury, Dorset. The grave is at the top of a grove where the young soldier had hoped to build a house.

It was probably a dream of his boyhood, and became a fixed ambition of his early manhood. He loved the spot, and hoped when the war was over to watch his "castle in the air" taking shape in the

[1] See No. 41.

new home where he would settle down with his young wife and their boy. But alas for this cherished plan! Instead of a home where long and happy years should be spent, the grove on the hill became his tomb.

Such is often the fate of our ambitions, however innocent they may be. It is one of the mysteries we cannot now understand, a problem so baffling and bewildering that by it the faith of many is sorely tried, sometimes smitten to death by its cold icy blast.

Let us never miss out of our calculations one thing. Whatever plans we draw or hopes we indulge in about life's building here below, let us make sure that "we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."[1] Then, if our poor human desires do fail in their fulfilment, we shall have something better in their place. We can afford to lose everything here if we do but gain our right and title through Christ our Elder Brother to one of His Father's "many mansions." The fairest day-dreams we cherish now will be seen to be poor in comparison with "the good things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."[2]

45. Drink.—A Conference was held at the Treasury (March 29, 1915), on the serious question of delay in the manufacture of munitions of war. A deputation, representative of the leading shipbuilding firms in the country, waited on the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Speaking with the experience of

[1] 2 Cor. vi. 1. [2] 1 Cor. ii. 9.

from twenty-five to forty years, the members of this deputation were unanimous in saying "They believed that 80 per cent. of the avoidable loss of time could be ascribed to no other cause than drink." In his reply, Mr. Lloyd George said, "Success in the war is now purely a question of munitions. I say that on the authority of our great general, Sir John French. . . . The excessive drinking in the works connected with the manufacture of these is interfering seriously with their output. . . . We are fighting Germany, Austria, and Drink; and, as far as I can see, the greatest of these three deadly foes is Drink."

How terrible is the power of this demon foe! Those who yielded themselves to its baneful influence forgot the claims of their country. It made them cruelly selfish in the wrong they were inflicting on their brave compatriots in the Army; because the failure to supply the munitions of war at the critical time prevented them from winning speedy and complete victories. It is sad to think how many thousands of noble lives had further to be sacrificed, and how many happy homes made desolate, owing to a want of the supply of munitions caused by the delay through drink. Is it not the same in times of peace as in war? Poverty, Sickness, and Drink—these are the foes which haunt with fear the thrifty and anxious wives and mothers among the wage-earning class; and the greatest of these three deadly foes is Drink. The craving for it makes men forget their first duties as husbands and fathers. Little children must cry for

food, and go hungry and shoeless and fireless, all because this accursed passion has mastered the better feelings of their natural protectors. It has turned its willing victims into monsters of selfish habits and callous unmindfulness of the pitiful cry of helpless ones dependent on them.

46. Duty and Sacrifice.—I was talking one winter evening, by the fireside, to a young soldier. He was a fine man, with a tall well-proportioned figure, strong in face and limb; evidently a gentleman. He had, at the beginning of the war, joined the ranks as a private, and was now a non-commissioned officer.

"Are you keen on going to the Front?" I asked him. He coloured slightly, and paused before replying. Then he said, "To speak frankly, I am not. I don't really like soldiering. I am engaged to be married; and, just before I volunteered, I had a good position offered me. So, you can understand, I am not really keen about going out. But," he added earnestly, "I am quite willing to go—willing to go anywhere."

In those words he just expressed the spirit of thousands of others. It was the strong sense of duty, the feeling of self-respect that moved him and those of like character to make the act of supreme self-sacrifice for the dear Homeland.

If this nation accepts the lessons of the war which God wants us to learn, then, when it is over, more of our young men of position and education will feel constrained by the love of Christ, to volunteer

for Imperial service in heathen and Mohammedan lands.

47. Enthusiasm and Gratitude.—In the early days of the war, a private soldier wrote home describing the reception accorded to the "British Expeditionary Force." Here is what he said: "I have never seen such enthusiasm. Old men, women and children fight in the streets to get close enough to shake hands with us, or beg a piece of cloth or a button from our uniforms as mementoes of the 'Entente,' as they call it. At one village the women clamoured for locks of hair from us, and they had to get them. Even the sick are brought to the doors to see us pass."

That was enthusiasm! And a fine thing it is! We might often show more of it towards those who are brave, or good, or self-sacrificing. But those French people did more than show enthusiasm. Our soldiers wrote home again and again to say that they had never received such kindness in their lives—even the very poor vying with the rich in giving all they had to our soldiers on the march. The best of all they had was given freely, lavishly. And why? Because they knew the British army had gone out there to help them in driving the brutal invader from their soil. In our khaki-clad soldiers they recognized the noblest and grandest army that had ever set foot on the fields of France; because they were all volunteers. To their enthusiasm was added the spirit of deep heart-felt gratitude. And they showed what they felt—

that they could not do enough for the men they hailed as saviours of their beloved land.

When those same men return to England—all of them that ever do come back—how shall we treat them? With enthusiasm, doubtless, at first. But let us never forget how much they have done for us. They went forth to meet our cruel foes, who hate us with a deadly hatred, on the plains of France and Flanders. In doing so, they saved us from the horrors of invasion. May we all remember how much we owe to them, and their comrades who died for us. It is the duty of the whole nation to see that neither the heroes who return, whether whole or maimed for life, nor the widows and orphans of those who fell should ever want. Enthusiasm is a fine thing, but gratitude is finer still. May the old reproach of neglecting our soldiers after former wars, find no place in the way we treat our brave defenders, after this Great War.

48. Eureka.—"The men out there in the Front have been making a discovery; they have been finding God."

This was said by an Army Chaplain. And the same kind of testimony has come from many another quarter. In the trenches of those awful battlefields in France men whose lives had once been prayerless turned in prayer to God for relief and found a refuge in Christ. Before they went out there they thought that the Bible was only for those who attend Church or Chapel, and "not for the likes of them." But, during the lull of shot and

shell, they had learned to open the little khaki Testament some one had given them, finding for themselves the message of Salvation, and then passing on the glad tidings of a Saviour's power and love to some dying comrade. They little thought once what they would so freely acknowledge now, that it was worth while to be sent out there and to endure hardship, aye and to face death itself, in order to make this discovery.

So it has often been elsewhere, and all the way along the ages, ever since the Lord first revealed Himself to the soul of man. In the days of health and prosperity, when the course of life runs smoothly and pleasantly, when the rich man is enjoying his full cup of success and pleasure, and the working-man earns all the wages he needs for his simple requirements, very little thought is given by most people to religion. But when men are brought face to face with the great realities of time and eternity, then they begin to feel the need of a strength and comfort and peace this world fails to give them. What a pity it is to wait until then! Such an opportunity perhaps never comes at all to some men. There is no need to wait. Such delays mean loss greater far than the unawakened soul can realize. For each man to find God for himself, by means of thought and prayer in quiet times, is to make the Great Discovery indeed. Only those who do know Him can realize all that it means, in the way of happiness, and power over temptation, and self-control, and newly-born courage, and satisfaction that never palls, and hopes

that never fade but shine more and more brightly when the darkness of night closes in.

49. Example.—A very grave situation was produced at one time by the curse of drink. The work in our armament factories was seriously delayed by the loss of time and waste of energy caused by the employees who dissipated both in the public-house. How to stop this evil which imperilled the success of our arms on land and sea became a problem of increasing difficulty. The responsible Government was undecided, and thoughtful people were almost in despair, when King George gave the lead. In a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in which he deplored the unhappy wrong which was being done to our gallant defenders at the Front, his Majesty concluded by saying, "If it be deemed advisable, the King will be prepared to set the example by giving up all alcoholic liquor himself and issuing orders against its consumption in the Royal Household, so that no difference shall be made, so far as His Majesty is concerned, between the treatment of rich and poor in this question."

This high-minded purpose was soon carried into effect. By the King's command no wines, spirits or beer were to be consumed in any of His Majesty's houses after April 6, 1915.

Lord Kitchener immediately announced his intention to follow the Royal example; and so did many thousands of people in the land.

It is the same always, wherever evil exists in any

form or degree. An example of self-denial by those in high position will always bear fruit among others occupying a humbler place in the community. Whether it be in the way of generous giving, or earnestness of purpose, or the limiting of time and money spent on selfish pleasure, let people of wealth and social standing and education know and believe that they possess great power of good and usefulness, if only they will in these ways set the example. Others—more than they think—are only waiting to follow their lead.

50. Example and Duty.—A few days after the death of Lord Roberts, placards were posted throughout the country, with a portrait of the great Field-Marshal, and underneath these words—

"He did His Duty:
Will You do Yours?"

That is how we should always be led to think of the great and good, who have passed from our midst. In their day and generation they did their duty; and the example they have left behind should be followed by us on whom devolves the sacred trust of bearing aloft the torch of truth and noble deeds and quiet unselfishness.

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."

51. Example—The Prince of Wales.—A private

of the 2nd Coldstream Guards, writing to his friends at Penarth, Cardiff, said: "I must tell you about the Prince, who is here with us. I can assure you and all Welsh people he is as brave as a hero. Only last night he passed me when German shells were coming over. You can take it from me that he is not only the Prince of Wales, but a soldier and a man, and we are all proud of him. He is not very big, but he has got a bigger heart than a lot who are hanging back in Great Britain. I hope, please God, he will come back safe and sound without a scratch."

This testimony corresponds with the same kind of evidence that has come from other quarters. It was difficult to keep our Prince from taking unnecessary risks. When remonstrated with for going into the danger-zone, he replied that he had several brothers at home, and if anything did happen to him, one of them could take his place! The only argument which prevailed with him was the complications which, it was pointed out to him, would arise if he were to fall as a prisoner into the enemy's hands. He probably felt, in addition to the fascination of danger for its own sake, that an outward manifestation of courage on his part would help others to bear themselves bravely; and on those awful battle-fields of France and Flanders there must have been many English lads who stood in need of the help such an example gave them. Seeing their Prince—himself little more than a boy—showing no signs of fear would inspire others to deeds of heroism when the day of their trial came.

Whether it be in the way of courage, or just dealings, or honourable conduct, or truthfulness in speech, or a high standard of pure living, it is always a grand thing when those of high birth or wealth or education set the example of what is right and good before others. No country is so democratic, that its people can ever fail to recognize or admire or be influenced by those who remember and live up to the old motto, "*Noblesse Oblige.*"

52. Excuses.—The Recruiting Sergeant had a very important duty to discharge; but he was not altogether a popular figure in the streets of London or any other large town. Young men of military age took care to avoid him when he was on his round. Urgent business, quite unforeseen, required their immediate presence elsewhere. Sometimes, when the young man himself was disposed to listen to the call of his country, there was angry interference by a parent, an employer, a sweetheart. But in a very large number of cases, the young man declined to join the Army apart from any outside influence. The decision rested with himself; and he was always ready with an excuse. "I'm earning good money; and I can't afford to give up my job." "I take no interest in the War." "I've never thought of the question seriously." "Yes, I am an Englishman; but I am an Englishman who is minding his own business, which is no concern of yours." These were among the common excuses offered, when an appeal was made to the man's sense of duty and instinct of patriotism.

There is always a call for recruits in the Army of our King Jesus. For every one who is willing to "fight under His banner against sin, the world and the devil," there is a place in the ranks of His Imperial Service. Not only young men, but all, of both sexes and of every age, are eligible for a post in some department of this service. But, alas! how often the appeal is made in vain! The Recruiting Sergeant—whether he be the clergyman, or the Sunday School teacher, or the District Visitor—pleads to no purpose with numbers, who could help but will not. "My business takes up all my time." "I am not really qualified for the work you invite me to take up." "For me, it would mean leading a different kind of life, and giving up certain things and some forms of amusement, which are not quite consistent with an out-and-out Christian life." "Yes; I do call myself a Christian; but I'm the sort of Christian who minds his own business, and I prefer to go my own way." These are among the excuses frequently made. And sometimes the man who is willing to bear the Cross of Christ is discouraged from doing so by the influences of home and business life. Let each one remember that for him the day of appeal is also the day of decision. Let him beware lest he range himself among those who refused the invitation to the Great Supper. "They all with one consent began to make excuse."[1]

53. Experience Teaches.—One of the most das-

[1] St. Luke xiv. 18.

tardly outrages ever perpetrated on the high seas was the torpedoing by a German submarine of the Elder-Dempster liner *Fallada*. It was an act of cold-blooded murder, resulting in a death-roll of 112, including the crew and passengers of this unarmed and therefore defenceless ship. The submarine remained on the scene long enough to witness the death-agonies of most of its victims; the officers and crew in the conning-tower even laughing and jeering at the struggles of drowning men and women. After the inquest held[1] at Milford Haven, a survivor said privately to a representative of the Press, "I had always taken German atrocities with a grain of salt; but after this experience I know better."

Evidently, he was among those who would not (because they could not) believe the stories of Prussian "frightfulness" so diabolically conceived and so ruthlessly put into force against the brave and helpless people of Belgium. But his eyes were opened to the reality of the whole hideous narrative, when he himself witnessed an instance of the wanton and cynical disregard of the laws of chivalry and humanity by which his fellow-passengers on the *Fallada* were murdered.

"The whole world lieth in darkness." We who have had some experience of its ways try to put young people on their guard by telling them of the ruin and havoc wrought by sin and the awful misery caused by those in whom the basest passions of human nature have gained the mastery. But they

[1] March 30, 1915.

smile incredulously. In their guileless innocence they cannot believe that such wickedness exists—at least among people who claim to be "Cultured." Only when they themselves have experienced the bitter sorrow and degradation of soul caused by selfish and vicious persons will they believe and acknowledge the awful nature of sin. Happy are they who come safely out of the troubled waters in which the early piety and heart-purity of so many suffer the tragedy of a cruel shipwreck.

54. Failure.—"A man may be overcome by forces stronger than himself, but that is not failure. A man fails when he does not rise to the topmost height of his own energy, character, and ability. Not to do that in a moment of need is to suffer and deserve disgrace."—General Joffre.

These are the words of a great soldier, spoken to his comrades-in-arms before the war commenced. The truth which they express may be applied elsewhere; and they are specially worth being taken to heart and remembered by the servant of Jesus Christ. The ministry of many among us is a sad failure. In some few cases, the failure is not a man's own fault. He is overborne by events unforeseen, or by circumstances which have proved too strong for his mental or physical endurance.

But the most frequent failures in the Church—and the worst—could never happen if the man would use freely the grace which God always wills to impart with the gifts He bestows. There are

the gifts of character, or preaching, or personal influence; but they lie dormant or are stunted in their growth. They are in some way hindered in their development, either by personal ambition, or lack of humility, or because the work is attempted without prayer or faith. So the man does not rise to the topmost height of what he might be and of all he might do. Such a ministry is bound to result in failure. The man himself suffers from its humiliation; the mission of the Church is hindered; and, worst of all, the Holy Spirit is grieved, because the name of Christ is dishonoured before the world.

55. Faith in God.—There is a Russian proverb which the peasant loves to use: "Without God you cannot move a step" (lit. "You cannot go as far as the threshold").

Do we, Christian people in England, believe in the truth of that saying? We should all like to do so. But if with all our hearts we did, should we not pray much more than we do? How anxiously during the war we have watched the course of events on land and sea! calculating on the supplies of ammunition, the foresight of our commanding officers, the powers of endurance in the ranks! Yet even these factors in the struggle are subject to the will of God. Tell Him you believe that. Ask Him for a stronger confidence, a more unquestioning faith. Faith is simply putting a hand of trust into the Hand of power. Let no theories of Rationalism or Materialism rob you of the hope

which that kind of faith inspires. Nothing in the whole universe can upset the truth of the old promise, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."[1]

56. A Faithful Messenger.—In the 2nd Royal Sussex was a cyclist orderly named Wedge. He was mortally wounded at Bethune (on January 25, 1915) by a shell which pitched in the road near him as he was returning to his regiment with a message from Headquarters. He was there attended to by Major Matthews, R.A.M.C., who afterwards wrote to the Commanding-officer of the Sussex regiment, saying he thought the regiment ought to know about their comrade's devotion to his duty. In the course of this letter, Major Matthews said: "His left leg was shattered, his left great toe and the next were nearly blown off, he had a severe wound of the chest, and his right hand was wounded. In spite of his wounds, all his concern and anxiety were that his message should reach his regiment, and he thought of little else."

What a fine sense of duty that man must have had! What a splendid instance he showed of heroic unselfishness! All he thought of, and all he cared for was that the message he had received from Headquarters should be faithfully given to those to whom he was charged to deliver it.

Every ordained minister of Christ's Gospel has a message from Headquarters which he has undertaken to deliver to those among whom he is called

[1] Prov. iii. 6.

to labour. But oh! how lightly this burden of souls seems to press on some men! Comparatively few are the number of those who are so enthralled by the constraining love of Christ as to think nothing of self in the eager resolve to proclaim the message of His redeeming grace. Rich will be the reward of the faithful ones whose first and last thought is to make their Lord's commands known among men.

57. Family Prayers.—Speaking in the House of Lords, on November 17, 1914, Lord Curzon said: "Only a little more than a fortnight ago I received a letter from Lord Roberts, the last he ever wrote to me, in which, amidst the trials of this war, whilst busily occupied in providing for the comfort of our troops in the field, and whilst all his larger thoughts were turned with anxiety to the issues of the campaign, he nevertheless found time to write to me a strong plea in defence of family prayer. These were his words: 'We have had family prayers for fifty-five years. Our chief reason is that they bring the household together in a way that nothing else can. Since the war began we usually read prayers, and when anything important has occurred I tell those present about it. In this way I have found that the servants are taking a great interest in what is going on in France. We have never given any order about prayers, attendance is quite optional, but as a rule all the servants, men and women, come regularly on hearing the bell ring.' My lords, the man who penned those words, even to a friend, was not only

a great soldier, a patriot, and a statesman, but also a humble-minded and devout Christian man, whose name deserves to live, and will live for ever in the memory of the nation whom he served with such surpassing fidelity to the last hour of a long and glorious life."

Lord Curzon proved himself worthy of the friendship he so highly prized, by this testimony and avowal so bravely uttered in the House of Lords. It produced a great impression throughout the whole of the country, which eventually found expression in a crowded meeting held in the Queen's Hall, London, on June 7, 1915.[1] The object of this meeting was to promote the Revival of Family Prayers. The Archbishop of Canterbury was in the chair, and Bishops sat side by side on the platform with Free Church leaders. In one respect the meeting was a memorial to the late Earl Roberts, whose name was frequently mentioned in terms of thankfulness for the example he had set. In all the speeches nothing was more touching than the description given, by Field-Marshal Lord Grenfell, of family prayers in the home of the late Lord Roberts. He noticed that when the Lord's Prayer was reached, the old Field-Marshal's hand was clasped in that of his wife, and the two repeated it together.

[1] When Lord Curzon heard from the Vicar of Leeds of the proposal to hold this meeting, he replied: "I am very glad the words I quoted were thought useful by you and may perhaps eventuate in such a movement as you describe. I really cited them with that object."

58. Fire kindles Fire.—In a leading article on Mr. Lloyd George,[1] the *Daily Telegraph* said: "The Minister of Munitions has but one gospel now, but he preaches it anew each time with wonderful freshness, and fire kindles fire."

Let every man who has been ordained to the Ministry of Christ know and believe that there is but one gospel for him to preach—the Gospel of Salvation from sin by the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. If he is himself convinced of its reality and is daily drawing from its hidden springs strength and inspiration, then every time he preaches it he will do so with unfailing freshness, and the fire of love that has been lighted in his own soul will kindle a corresponding fire in the souls of others.

59. Foreign Missions.—On one occasion Lord Roberts, and with him two distinguished generals, addressed a letter privately to a number of Army officers, who were going abroad on active service. He said, "You will most certainly come into contact with the representatives of various Christian Missionary Societies, whose special work it is to show to non-Christian peoples the love of the Christ Whom we profess to serve. We commend these missionaries to you as a body of men and women who are working helpfully with the Government and contributing to the elevation of the people in a way impossible to official action. Some object to Christian Missions in ignorance of their real value. We would suggest that you use all opportunities of

[1] June 14, 1915.

making yourselves personally acquainted with the work they are doing and the character of the converts. Most missions will bear looking into, and we are convinced that if you will do this, you will never afterwards condemn or belittle them."

60. Foreign Missions—How to be Maintained.—The special military expert, who contributed a series of brilliant and illuminating articles on the war in *Navy and Army*, in one of these[1] wrote: "The whole community is made up of three classes, viz., the statesmen who control war, the soldiers and sailors who wage war, and the civil population who support war. Of the last-named we expect men, money, material and munitions; and if they fail to supply any one of the commodities in sufficient quantity or with sufficient promptitude, the result, of course, must be serious to a degree which is terrible to contemplate." There is a most suggestive analogy between this principle of modern warfare and the conditions under which the Foreign Missionary work of the Church is carried on. Here also are three classes: (1) The leaders at the home base who control the work, *i.e.*, the directors and committees of our Great Church Societies; (2) the men and women who go out as missionaries to the heathen and Mohammedan peoples of the world; and (3) the great mass of Church-people who stay at home, supporting the Cause in various ways. Of them it is expected that they will keep up the supply of men and of money; and also that they

[1] April 3, 1915.

will, by their prayers and interest and sympathy, obtain and give all that is required for upholding and strengthening their brothers and sisters in far-distant lands. Let us who belong to this last group examine ourselves before the Lord, in the light of His will and commandments. If on our part we fail, then also it is true that "the result must be serious to a degree which is terrible to contemplate."

61. Foreign Missions and the Empire.—In January, 1915, a London daily paper printed a criticism on foreign missions, which complained that money should go out of the country at this time "for the attempted and very problematical conversion of some far-off heathen."

Objectors to foreign missions and critics of their value and usefulness will always be found. It is well to know how to answer them. To reply on religious or spiritual grounds would not be accepted by such censors as reasonable or practical. So we will answer by pointing out the strength which accrues to the Empire when its heathen dependencies become Christianized.[1] On purely national grounds and for patriotic reasons, the two following incidents ought to convince the gainsayers how great are the blessings which the country derives from successful missions to its heathen peoples.

(1) About the time when the above criticism was thus publicly made, H.M. Secretary of State for the Colonies accepted an offer of Fijian troops to serve in the war. Now the forefathers of these

[1] See also No. 72.

soldiers were cannibal savages. How is it that they have so risen in civilization as to be considered fit to serve and fight side by side with British regiments? The answer is that, eighty years ago, the Wesleyan Missionaries gained a foothold in Fiji. To-day there are no heathen to be found there. Just before Christmas, 1914, a thousand Bibles in their own language were sent out to them. Christian Missions have raised them, until they are worthy of taking an equal place with their fellow-subjects in the defence of the British Empire.

(2) A few weeks later, an inspection of the Maori contingent was held at Avondale, New Zealand. The *Evening Post* of Wellington, in reporting this, says that a Maori chief addressed the soldiers in these words: "For the first time in the history of the Maori race, all tribes are united to fight together for the Empire. We have learned wisdom, and regret our former violence; and we are now at last united to help to fight for our white brethren. You soldiers, don't forget that we all originate from one common stock. We worship one God. Be truthful, be honourable. You carry the honour of the Maori race in your hands. Be brave; and remember the flag you will have flying over your tents. With reference to your religious beliefs, don't forget that you aim for one Heaven. Fear God, read and study your Bibles, and may the British reign over us for ever."[1]

[1] These words might well be quoted, as an unanswerable argument to the German myth—so assiduously circulated—about British misrule and the superiority of Teutonic

62. Forgiveness—A Story from Russia.—On the breast of a Russian officer, killed in action, was found a letter written to him by his mother (a widow), before he left for the Front.

After exhorting him to be as brave as his father, "a hero," had been, and to believe in the better life beyond, she went on to say, "With kisses and blessings I parted from you. When you are sent to perform a great deed, don't remember my tears, but only my blessing. God save you, my dear, bright, loved child. One thing more: It is written everywhere that the enemy is cruel and savage. Don't be led by blind vengeance. Don't raise your hand at a fallen one; but be gracious to those whose fate it is to fall into your hands."

In the sweet spirit of mercy and forgiveness breathed by these words, we draw comfort amid the horrors of the war. They come as an assurance of the final victory of love over hate, of peace over strife. If a mother could send her dearly-loved son into battle with those words, and if he could die with them cherished close to his breast, should we not also try to forgive the small injuries sometimes

"Kultur." They prove the deep loyalty of those races which enjoy the freedom of England's flag. Without the teaching of Christ and the lessons of truth and honour which they have learned from the Holy Scriptures, such a noble appeal could never have been made. The Maoris, like the Fijians, owe the progress of their race to the power of the Gospel, brought to their shores by the Missionaries of the Cross.

done to us, or (what is harder still for some) the wrongs done to those whom we tenderly love ?

63. Forgiveness—A Story from France.—During August, 1914, when the German army of invasion overran the North of France, deeds of brutal cruelty and murder were perpetrated on the civilian population. The evidence of this is too strong for the terrible reality to be doubted or its accuracy discounted by the denials of German apologists. In one of the French frontier departments was the small town or village of Badonviller (unfortified). This was bombarded by the German soldiers, who then entered the place, terrifying its inhabitants ; and, under the pretext of having been fired on, they assassinated eleven people, including the wife of the Mayor and a poor woman with a child in her arms. When the news came of an advancing French force, these modern Huns fled from the smoking ruins of the houses and buildings. The next day a German prisoner was brought in by a French patrol. The villagers gathered round, their hearts naturally full of vengeance ; and they would soon have torn him to pieces, until between them and their victim stood the Mayor of the place, M. Benoit, whose wife had been murdered by this man's comrades. Instead of joining with others in the fury that was blazing for revenge to be gratified, M. Benoit pleaded for the prisoner. He fought down the will of the people, and saved the wretched man's life. What an instance of the nobility of a human soul triumphing over the instinct of revenge !

The story of his magnanimity was reported to the

French President and his Ministry. So impressed were they, that immediately they made M. Benoit a Knight of the Legion of Honour. The declaration reads thus: "For heroic behaviour, in that, his wife having been assassinated and his house burned, he continued to discharge his duties with cool devotion, and also saved the life of a prisoner threatened by the just wrath of the inhabitants, giving thus a magnificent example of energy and greatness of soul."

A more wonderful or beautiful instance of forgiveness is hardly on record in the annals of the whole world's history. It sounds like an echo of that sublime utterance from the Cross, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."

Let the story rebuke any who may cherish a grudge or who are tempted to show an unforgiving spirit towards those who have wronged them.

64. Forgiving our Enemies.—"A little girl in East London has been in the habit of bringing a bunch of flowers each Saturday night to a German lady whom she loves. She has done so all through the war. Her brother went down with one of our sunk cruisers, and the lady hardly expected the flowers that week. But the girl came all the same next Saturday, and in mourning, bringing the flowers as before."[1]

Forgiveness is one of the choicest gems in the diadem of Christian character. And, like the

[1] *In the Day of Battle*, by the Bishop of Stepney (Longmans), page 137.

precious stone, it has many facets with varying colours. For instance, to forgive the person who has wronged you is not quite the same thing as to forgive him who has wronged some one else whom you respect, or admire, or love. It may be harder or it may be easier, according to each one's degree of self-esteem or devotion to the object of affection. To forgive those who are the enemies of our country is another form of the same virtue. Our duty in the matter has lately perplexed many good people, and caused some controversy. There has been a good deal of talk—sometimes foolish and irresponsible, and for the most part premature—about "forgiving Germany." Germany must first be conquered, and her national pride and arrogance humbled, and such a peace concluded as will prevent her from bringing another hideous war on the civilized world. Then we must show the German people that we cherish no revenge towards any of them personally. It will probably be far more difficult to make them see the duty and feel the joy of Christian charity. That little girl with her unquenched love and gift of flowers has shown the way for us all. It will be by acts of personal kindness and courteous generosity, showing the grace of forgiveness, that we must try to break down the spirit of hate that has been so terribly aroused in Germany against us.

65. Friendship.—At the Inaugural Meeting [1] of the Russian Society, Mr. Neil Primrose [2] said, "It

[1] At the Speaker's house, March 10, 1915.

[2] Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

is not enough merely to profess friendship with Russia; the two nations must show that friendship by trying to understand each other's national aspirations."

It is the failure to do this which has often wrecked the fair prospects of a good understanding and a lasting peace between countries that might have worked in harmony for the mutual good of both. But those who represented their peoples were absorbed in their own narrow interests and insular well-being, instead of trying to understand the aspirations of the other.

As among nations, so is it with all human friendships. What professions are often made! And how little do they lead to! All because we do not try to put ourselves in the place of him or her we call "Friend." In each heart there are aspirations, ambitions, desires, longings. If we had more real sympathy, we should make it our great purpose to understand these. In nearly every case, the desire and effort to do so would be appreciated—how much we should only know when we had found our way into another's heart and learned its secrets. And then friendship would be cemented by the strong bond of the love that gives itself freely in the desire to understand and be understood.

We may lift up this principle into a region higher still, and transfer it from the human to the Divine. Instead of national or personal aspirations, we ought humbly to try and understand the will and purpose of God in the world. Abraham was called the friend of God; he proved himself worthy of

that great distinction by absolute obedience to every word of the Lord with Whom he walked. It is not enough to profess our fellowship with God. Each one must prove the reality of his faith and love by trying to understand and then to carry out God's will in his own life.

66. Gaps to be filled up.—On the second Sunday in May, 1914, at the morning service in a certain Wesleyan Church, twenty-four men and women of various ages confessed their faith in Christ and were received into Church-membership. Among them was a young man aged twenty-two, who came forward, and modestly but firmly pledged himself to be "a faithful soldier of Jesus Christ."

The morning service in the same Church on the second Sunday in May, 1915 (just one year after), was a memorial service for that young man. On Hill 60 near Ypres, he had bravely laid down his life in defence of country and liberty. The officiating minister drew attention to the gap caused by his death in the membership of their Church, and asked if any one present would take the place of the hero-saint? At the close of the service he was followed into the vestry by an elder married brother of the dead soldier, who said, with a sob in his voice, "I want to fill the gap, and to take my brother's place." Not in vain certainly had that young life been given in sacrifice. Every man who dies in defence of home and freedom leaves a gap which some one ought to fill. Out on the battlefield that is done, and usually done promptly. But

there is also the gap left at home. Every hero's death means one citizen less on the roll of England's noblest sons. It means there is some bit of work, either in the Church or Society, or both, left undone. Let this thought be a call to others to step into the breach. The older man can say, "I will be more faithful, more thoughtful for others, more outspoken and consistent as a Christian, so as to make up, as far as I can, for the loss caused by some younger brother's death." And each boy can say, "I will try and grow like those I read about, the brave men who died so nobly to save us all from the horrors of invasion. For their sake, with the help of God, I will lead a life of true manliness; I will try to do some of the things they would have done if they had been spared to come home."

67. A Generous Foe.—An Englishman who was at the battle of Mons, wrote home describing how he and a comrade had lain wounded on the ground. His friend seemed to be dying of thirst, and cried out piteously for "Water." None could be found, until a German officer, who was mortally wounded, beckoned to an ambulance man, and pointed to his own water-flask. It was raised to his lips; but with an emphatic "*Nein, nein,*" was refused. He insisted that it should be given to the English soldier, whose poignant thirst had moved him to compassion. "We buried that noble German," says the writer, "with all the honours we could; and though we did not know his name, we placed over his grave a little wooden cross, with this simple inscription, 'A I.'"

In the day when the light of a fuller clearer knowledge is made to shine upon the deeds of men, alike base and noble, his name will be declared; and with it many others too—the names of brave men who, even in the hour of death, showed the spirit of unselfish thought for others, whether friends or foes. "The cup of cold water" given in the Name of Christ shall not lose its reward.

There is something else here too. All German officers are not cruel; nor do all German people hate us English with a malevolence as unreasonable as it is unchristian. "A 1" certainly did not subscribe to the creed of "Frightfulness" as laid down in the German War Book. In every nation there are noble exceptions to the rule of national sins or failures. In the highest ranks of society and in the masses alike, there are many who stand out in noble contrast to the rest of the class they belong to. We should guard against narrow prejudices, looking out for and welcoming with large-hearted charity all that is good in those from whom we differ.

68. A Generous Giver.—The congregation of Christ Church, Gipsy Hill, were asked to give as their offertory on Easter Day (1915) the sum of £400 for a Motor Ambulance for British soldiers in France. The appeal so touched the heart and imagination of the congregation, that the splendid sum of £542 was the response. A friend who had, during the day, put £8. 5. on the plate, called on the Vicar a few days afterwards and gave him £260 to bring the collection up to £800, the cost of two

ambulances. But when it was ascertained that no further contributions could be received by the authorities unless each was accompanied by £100 towards "running" expenses, the same friend came once more to Canon Joynt (the Vicar) with a further noble contribution of £200. These two generous gifts from this anonymous donor made up the whole offering to £1,000.

That is a fine principle on which to give—to keep on adding to former donations, and increasing the amount as time goes on!

How that generous-hearted man must have enjoyed giving! And the keenness of his pleasure must have been accentuated by the fact that he gave it all anonymously.

Only a rich man, of course, could give like that. But in these days when taxes are increasing and the expense of living becomes greater, those who are endowed with wealth have a great responsibility. Could not more among us contrive to add to their contributions to the Lord's work in the world? When the real privilege of giving is rightly appreciated, there will be no talk of reducing subscriptions, but rather of doubling and trebling them, when that is possible.

69. God with Us.—According to a telegram from Warsaw, a German staff order was found on the Bzura which ascribed Germany's use of lethal gases to a Divine inspiration. This curious document ran as follows:—

"God Himself is with us and supports us in our

struggle against the world. We have by His dispensation received into our hands a new and potent weapon, the gas with which we have vanquished our enemies. The sole object of our efforts is to extend the power and dominion of mighty Germany over Europe, and we must continue to fight until final and assured victory has been won."

The order concludes with an exhortation that no mercy should be shown to the Russians who "torture and kill German prisoners." It does not state, however, whether it was also by Divine inspiration that a few days previously the Germans had to retire from their trenches because of the lethal fumes blown back upon them by a sudden change of wind. Not does it explain the statement made by the German prisoners that the men who discharge the gases are frequently poisoned and killed by its effects.

What are we to say about a document like this with its audacious claims to a Divine dispensation? Perhaps the best answer we can give is to be found in the words, written before the war broke out by the great author and reformer Tolstoy, who said, "There are two Gods; there is the God whom people generally believe in, the God who has to serve them. This God does not exist; but the God Whom people forget, the God Whom we all have to serve, does exist." The true servants of the True God are not those who shout that He is on their side, but those who are careful to make sure that they are on His side, and that they are doing His will, not taking for granted that He should do theirs.

70. God's Name—taken in vain.—The most terrible record of infamy ever established against any Government or people is to be found in the report of Lord Bryce's "Committee upon alleged German outrages."[1] A mere glance at the summary of this makes the mind recoil in horror. One department of the military system for terrorizing and disheartening the inhabitants of Belgium was the "Corps of Incendiaries," regularly equipped for the work of burning houses and public buildings. The members of this corps had on their belts the motto "*Gott mit uns*" ("God with us"). The same motto is, I believe, inscribed on the helmets of all German soldiers.

How can men dare to use the Holy Name of the God of love and justice in their calculated crimes of hideous cruelty and bestial outrage? Is God really with them? Are the prayers to Him so ostentatiously paraded by their First War Lord really accepted by Him? And can He bless them? If so, our hearts might despair of the ultimate triumph of good over evil. We know what the verdict of the civilized world is on German outrages. The conscience of neutral nations unanimously reprobates this outlaw people. Nor will the outward display of a religion, whereby "the spirit of war is deified," save Germany from the sentence of "Guilty" to be one day pronounced by a Divine Tribunal. The German soldier who robs a wounded or dying British soldier of his uniform, and then endeavours, while speaking in the English language,

[1] Published May 13, 1915.

to perform some act of treachery under this cloak, when found out, has to pay the extreme penalty. No protestations of innocence and good faith uttered in a language he has no right to use will then avail; nor will the outward dress he wears prove any screen against the execution of the death-sentence.

Neither will the outward profession of religion save a man from the just wrath of God, when by his conduct he has violated every principle of right. This is made perfectly clear in the Bible. No words could be plainer than the awful warning uttered by our Divine Lord and Master: "Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?'

"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity."[1]

71. A good Confession.—Preaching on the death of Lord Roberts, the Vicar of Leeds said: "His piety was unobtrusive, but it was the key to all his stainless career. Many years ago I heard him say in a speech at Woolwich that he was proud to belong to the Army of Queen Victoria, but prouder still to belong to the Army of the King of kings. Two years ago I reminded him of this in London, and instantly came the answer, 'Fancy you remembering that! Well, I thought so then, and I think so still.'"

They who know Christ as He is, and who believe in Him as their Divine Saviour, must feel in Him a

[1] St. Matthew vii. 22, 23.

pride and joy that will show itself at times. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." However justifiable may be the pride a man feels in some honoured position or great distinction, if he is a true Christian he will feel constrained to acknowledge fearlessly, "I am prouder still to have a place in the Kingdom of my Lord Jesus Christ."

72. The Gospel—its Power in Heathen Lands.—In the hill country of Southern Nigeria are a people called the Ekite. Although they have suffered severely through the war, they have sent over £25 to the Prince of Wales' Fund.

Is not that a wonderful thing? a tribe of natives from West Africa collecting and forwarding such a sum of money (large for them) to such an object! It seems almost incredible. It would be quite so, but for one fact about which no mistake should be made. The money was contributed, not by a horde of savage cannibals, but by the Christians of the Ekite churches, and the whole thing was initiated by an Ekite Christian, who was once a slave. What will the armchair critic and objector to missions among the heathen say to that? It is an argument which he will find hard to answer. The fact is worth pressing home; there can be from it only one fair and logical conclusion.

73. Gratitude.—"The little kindnesses of the Sisters of Mercy are appreciated by the Russian soldiers beyond measure; and when these veritable angels enter a ward of soldiers every head turns on

its pillow, and every eye dumbly follows with love the figure in white that passes from bed to bed. If a sister stop for a moment, the great soldier with his faltering strength will raise her hand to his lips, or gently press it between his own emaciated palms."[1]

How very pathetic is all this! Here indeed is one of the rays of light from the Cross, piercing the gloom of war's horrors, and telling of the love of Christ reflected by His disciples in some of the darkest days in the world's history. And here also we see poor fallen human nature at its best—grateful for kindness shown to it in distress, thankfully acknowledging the love which alleviates its pain and suffering.

There is always sorrow and distress in the world—somewhere. And there is always loving-kindness and tender pity to heal and comfort. Alas! there is not always the responsive gratitude. The spirit of thankfulness is often wanting; and the words of grateful appreciation are withheld, when, if spoken, they would be accepted as an ample reward for love richly lavished. In thousands of homes there are angels in human form—mothers, sisters, wives, children—whose ministry of unselfish devotion is met by indifference, or taken ungraciously as a matter of course. And the pathway of every life is strewed by the Heavenly Father's hand with countless mercies, which are received by many without a word of gratitude. Of the ten lepers cleansed by the healing touch of the Lord Jesus,

[1] *The Times*, March 8, 1915.

only one returned to give thanks. "From an ungrateful heart and thankless lips, Good Lord, deliver us."

74. The Great Opportunity.—At a public meeting held at the Guildhall,[1] Lord Kitchener made an earnest appeal for more recruits, at the close of which he said: "It has been well said that in every man's life there is one supreme hour towards which all earlier experience moves and from which all future results may be reckoned. For every individual Briton, as well as for our national existence, that solemn hour is now striking. Let us take heed to the great opportunity it offers and which most assuredly we must grasp now and at once—or never."

How true these weighty words were at the time of their utterance the memory and hearts of thousands will bear witness as long as they live. They are always true, as those who have had any deep experience of life can testify. Sometimes the supreme hour strikes when the Voice of God by His Spirit calls a man and pleads with him to take that first step in the right direction which we call Conversion; or the supreme hour may strike for some one else who has been brought up in the light of Christian truth, demanding a more complete surrender of the will to the claims of that Saviour Who is entitled to a whole-hearted service instead of a luke-warm adherence to His Cause. It is a solemn thing to be assured that when the great

[1] July 10, 1915.

opportunity is offered it may never again recur, that each one must grasp it "now and at once—or never."

75. Harmony among Christians.—In a letter addressed to the chaplains and congregations in North and Central Europe, Bishop Bury described a service at the Embassy Church in Paris which, he thinks, may prove historic.

"It consisted of special prayers, with a lesson read—in French—by the President of the French Protestant Synod, which was represented by many of its ministers. There were Nonconformist ministers, resident for some time in Paris; Dr. Watson, of the American Church, and his colleague; and the Russian Arch-Priest, in his robes, was in the chancel beaming brotherly kindness and Christian charity upon us all. If our Roman Catholic brethren could have been present representatively as well, it would have made our sense of unity complete; but even as it was, it made one feel deeply thankful. I preached to them from the text: 'Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.'"

76. Hatred—its Fruits.—Captain Macnab, a Harley Street specialist, went out as medical officer to the London Scottish. During the splendid achievements of that renowned regiment, he was bending over two stricken men, attending to their wounds. "It was bright moonlight, and he had a white badge and red cross on his arm, and even a blue tunic on, so as to be absolutely unmistakable, and was, of course, without arms of any sort." But, "like inhuman fiends," the German soldiers bayonetted

him to the death where he stood, before his comrades' eyes. How could they have been guilty of such a dastardly deed?—those men, all of whom wore on their helmets the motto "God with us?"

Only because they had been trained to hate the English, and the lust of killing even a noble man, risking his own life in an act of mercy, had possessed them for the time being with the spirit of madness and inhumanity. A reproduction in our day of the spirit of wild fury and hate with which that people of old, who claimed to be God's chosen race, "Killed the Lord of Glory" Whose whole life had been spent in doing good and in acts of divine compassion, mercy and love.

77. Hearts Brave and True.—There is a Serbian proverb, "Victory is not won by shining arms, but by brave hearts."

The shining arms are needed by every soldier; he could not fight without them. Yet the heart within his breast that beats with love of country and scorn of danger, and the willingness to submit to death rather than be disloyal to his captain or his comrades—this is better than burnished steel. The *moral* of the army counts for more than its outward equipment. It is the same in that spiritual conflict we are all called on to wage against "the world, the flesh and the devil." The outward profession of our Christian faith must be there. Each one is called on to bear his witness to the truth, and, if need be, to defend it by word or deed.

But far more important is it to have a sound

heart within—a heart that is loyal to the truth, and strong with a sense of duty, and fearless with the courage that is born of the love of Christ.

78. Heaven—and Recognition.—A Leicestershire lad belonging to a Scottish regiment was sent out in the early days of the war. He and some comrades on one occasion strayed from the main body and were almost starving, when they were found by a Belgian woman, who brought them bread and fruit and milk—all she had in fact—sending them on their way like new men. This lad, being afterwards wounded, was sent home to one of the London hospitals for an operation. When he was convalescent, he went down to his old home in Leicestershire, where his sister was living. When he arrived at the village, there, standing in the door of his sister's cottage, was the very woman who had befriended him. She was among the Belgian refugees who had fled from their own country and had found an asylum at this remote place in England. She did not know him at first ; but he recognized her at once. Little had she thought, when feeding out of her scanty store those famished British soldiers, that she would be the first to welcome him on his return to the home of his childhood.

That must have been a very unusual coincidence —a very exceptional experience. But in the Home Beyond, there will be thousands and thousands among the hungry and weary and sad and tempted of this earth, who will there meet those who were once to them as God's angels of mercy, helping them

then in their distress and sending them on their way with new courage and hope. Blessed are they who have eyes to see, and hearts to feel for those who need their compassion and help now. Heaven will be all the brighter for them if they can there meet some to whom they have ministered in the day of their necessity here below.

79. Helping the Young.—Early in April, 1915, the English collier *Sunik* was making her way from Malta to the Dardanelles. The charts of the Mediterranean are old and very inaccurate; the currents and innumerable islands of the Archipelago make navigation hazardous. It was indeed a voyage of discovery to the commanders of ships traversing these waters for the first time. For three days and nights a storm of wind and rain made correct sailing difficult for the *Sunik*, which had been chartered as a Fleet messenger. Through the mist caused by rain and surf-spray, two little black dots are sighted a long way to port, and the captain pronounces them to be North Sea trawlers. They are making frantic efforts to overtake the larger ship; so she slows down and waits for them in the trough of the sea. When they come up, two figures in oilskins are made out on the tiny bridges; they are two young sub-lieutenants, who have been placed in charge of these trawlers, to take them to the Dardanelles.[1] "They hail us through the megaphone," wrote a war correspondent [2] on the *Sunik*:

[1] Probably to be used as mine-sweepers.
[2] Mr. E. Ashmead-Bartlett.

"'We are quite lost; haven't an idea where we are! Can we follow you in?' Our captain gives the destination, and once more we get underway." The two trawlers, increasing their speed, keep as close as they can, and follow the big ship to the port she is bound for.

On the great highway of life's ocean there are tracts of dangerous waters, where safe navigation and progress in the right direction are not easy even for the experienced voyager. And there we come across young lives, trying to do their duty, amidst the currents and shoals and rocks of temptation and unbelief. And, more than we know, more even than they themselves are fully aware, they are looking to us who are older and more experienced than they are. And though their lips may be silent, their hearts are crying out, "Where are you bound for? We do not know the way; without some one to guide us we are lost. Can we follow you in?"

Shall we not slow down, and wait for them more patiently? Shall we not gladly tell them all we know, and show them how to steer a straight course to the soul's true destination—the heart of God in Jesus Christ?

80. Heroism—in Young Hearts.—"I thought God had given me an ordinary boy; I find He has given me a hero." This was said by one mother certainly; and the same words might have been uttered by thousands more. At the railway stations, in the streets, along the country roads, in their sober khaki they could be seen; many of them shy by

nature, with never a thought until lately of entering the army; with no ambition for winning the laurels of military fame; but none the less heroes, because they gave up all at the call of country and duty.

In a temporary hospital near the Front, after the dearly-bought victory of Neuve Chapelle, a brave lad lay mortally wounded. The nurse who waited on him wrote home and said, "He was so happy because the British had won; exclaiming, 'Oh, sister, won't mother be so pleased when she knows her boy was there?' Poor laddie! It was pathetic to see him. I asked him what he would like to drink, and he said, 'Some tea, like what mother makes.' . . . He did so enjoy it! and then he gave me his mother's address, and said he was tired and would sleep. He slept his last sleep within a few minutes."

Is that the end of a mother's tender care and pride? the early death of a hero-son? No; a thousand times No! The prayers that she offered for him, and the love which never let him go out of her thoughts will have their answer and reward hereafter. If the ordinary boy was found to be a hero in this life, in the life to come he will be recognized as a martyr transformed into the glory of an angel. The heroic spirit in the nation has been revived. The latent quality of self-sacrifice has been evoked. The cost of this in bright young lives has been terrible. But they have not been laid down in vain. For generations to come, we shall be a nobler and a greater people, because of the splendid example set by these heroic lads.

81. Holy Communion.—In the Royal Academy (1915) was an oil painting,[1] which places on record the deeply religious spirit that was so remarkably displayed on the battle-field by many of our soldiers. Just behind the firing-line, a few rough boards had been laid on the ground, so as to form a slightly raised platform. On this was placed an Altar or Holy Table draped with the Union Jack. The clergyman had consecrated the bread and wine, and was giving "the Cup of the Lord" to a company of soldiers who, with bared heads and rifles in their hands, were kneeling to receive the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ. Other soldiers were marching past. An officer was standing on a slight elevation near by, watching the battle in progress through his field-glasses. Behind him, on a flag-staff waved the Red Cross flag. It was amidst such surroundings that this group of Christian men were gathered, all of them seeming to be unmindful of anything but the act of worship in which they were engaged. What may we suppose to have been the predominant thoughts and motives in their hearts?

The answer I think may be found in the words inscribed by the artist at the foot of the picture: "Conservet corpus tuum et animam tuam."[2]

Each of those men, realizing that death might lay him low within a few hours, wanted two things: the assurance of past sins forgiven, and strength imparted for the ordeal that lay before him. Those

[1] By W. H. Y. Titcomb.

[2] May It (i.e., the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ) preserve thy body and soul.

men believed that both of these were to be found in Jesus Christ; and the Holy Communion was their Lord's appointed means of giving them both the assurance and the strength.

That, we believe, is the right spirit in which the Christian should always come to this Holy Feast. It does give to each repentant believing soul the assurance of sins atoned for, as it is the seal of our redemption; and it does impart strength to those who feed on Christ "after an heavenly and spiritual manner."

82. Home.—What has been called "the nicest story and the truest ever to be told"[1] of General Joffre, the great French Commander-in-Chief, is this: The battle of the Marne had been fought and won. This man of splendid strength and resolution showed no signs of elation, but was, outwardly at least, unmoved. One of his staff, who thought it strange that at such a time a victorious commander should not exhibit some exuberance of joy, said to him, "Do you know, General, that you have won what is perhaps the greatest battle in history?" Joffre looked at him quietly for a moment, and calmly answered, "What I have won, I hope, is a right to rest the sooner in my little house in the Eastern Pyrenees."

There is no surer sign of true nobility in a great man than love of home. And probably it is this very quality and its influence over him that has so

[1] *Chambers' Journal* (The Heart of Things), February, 1915.

largely helped to keep General Joffre (unlike the average Frenchman) free from the wearing effects of emotionalism and excitement, in the midst of his arduous labours and tremendous responsibility. The thought of home with its rest and quiet and peace, and the loving presence of some one who understands each of us as no one else can, and whose love never changes with our varying fortunes—what a source of strength and comfort this always is! It is an anchor that will hold the ship safe through any storm when far from port.

For the Christian—whatever may be his successes or reverses in life—there is always this comforting reflection: Whether I win or lose now, I know that He in Whom I trust has won for me a resting-place, when all life's battles are over—a mansion in His Father's house, a home with Him.

83. Hope in Sorrow.—In a fine allegorical poem, entitled "The Broken Rose,"[1] Annie Vivanti Chartres pictures King Albert, with his loved country lying at his feet,

> "a crushed and morient rose
> Trampled and desecrated by his foes."

What is to be the fate of this torn dead Belgium,

> "This rose flung out upon the sand?"

The answer comes in the form of a white-robed Figure Who draws near, with "sweet-faced Peace," His herald "going before Him."

[1] *King Albert's Book*, page 103.

> "He sees the dead rose lying in the sand,
> He lifts the dead rose in His holy hand,
> And lays it at His breast.
>
> . . . .
>
> O broken rose of Belgium, thou art blest!"

Thus the poem ends, leaving it to the reader's imagination to fill in the sure and certain sequel. If outraged Belgium, as a nation, yields herself to the constraining power and tender pity of the love of Christ, He will do more than build again her ruined cities, more than restore her deserted altars, more than give back to her people their houses and lands, their arts and commerce. He will bless them as they have never yet been blessed. He will make their country to be a praise in all the earth—an enduring monument of righteous protest, putting to shame all future schemes of cruel invasion on the part of her strong neighbours. So may "poor little Belgium" become "Belgium the great and glorious!"

The poem also has a message for others besides Albert the Good and Brave.

You too may be in trouble. Your heart's desire, like a broken rose, lies at your feet on some desert sand. What is to be your hope? Lift up your eyes, and look! Behold, He comes, the "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Tell Jesus all about it. Let Him take your broken rose and "lay it at His breast." And there will come to you a new hope, an abiding peace, the assurance of a better and a happier life, in His way and at His own time.

84. Hope of the Sunrise.—Within the south-western confines of the Austrian Empire are the States of Croatia and Slavonia, the former reaching to the Adriatic Sea. So far as history has recorded, the Slavs and Croatians, as twin tribes, have always pitched their tents together. For centuries now they have been oppressed by the tyranny of their Austrian masters, acting for them as hewers of wood and drawers of water; and, under compulsion, serving in the ranks of Austria's armies, but even then never learning a word of German beyond the necessary words of command. Bitterly do they resent their servile condition. Never do they cease to long for national freedom. When Slav meets Croat to-day, they exchange a curious greeting: "Nada danicha!" "Nada" in Slavonic means "hope," "danicha" means "The sunrise"—"Hope of the sunrise!" or "Hope on: the sun will rise!" Their eyes are ever turned towards the coming dawn of their cherished Slavonic freedom. There have always been, since the world began, not in one land but in all countries, those who have suffered and sorrowed under the yoke of oppression. How many are there, even in this favoured land of boasted freedom, whose lives are saddened or crushed beneath the burden of toil and poverty, or ill-health and disappointment! Let none such yield to the worse evil of despair. There is no need for that. Far better and wiser is it to keep alive, in our own hearts and in the hearts of others, the undying hope of the Resurrection to a life beyond, where all shall be free, enjoying the full liberty of those whom Christ

hath ransomed from the slavery of sin and the cruel taskmaster Satan. Would it not help our own faith and that of others too, if we spoke more often in the language of Christian discipleship about the certainty of the life beyond the grave? Why should not sad-hearted men and women among us greet each other in the spirit of the Slav-Croatians? "Hope on; for the Sun will rise."

85. Hungering for News.—A correspondent of the *Globe* wrote a graphic account of his experience in a railway train that runs twice a week to one of the "outback parts" of Australia. Through the open window he heard a long quavering cry of "Pape-e-r." On a rough road that ran parallel with the line he saw two men covered with dust as from a long tramp. "What do they want?" the traveller asked of an Australian sitting in his compartment. "They are shouting to the passengers to throw out their old newspapers. In these lonely parts they cannot buy such things, and every man is hungry for news. You can't give them enough; they read every line; they want to know how the war is going on. You can't understand how they feel—this longing, this anxiety, this waiting for news." At the next stopping place, the writer saw a group of men, looking eagerly at the passengers, but appearing too shy to betray their feelings. Among them was a young man who looked like an Englishman. When the writer offered him the one paper he had left, "Such a look came over the youngster's face." With hands of trembling eager-

ness he received the gift; and stammered out: "Oh! A home paper—thanks awfully."

The writer adds: "It was good to feel one could so easily give so great a pleasure, and I watched the exile tuck away his precious paper, with a little glow in my heart. But through the rest of my journey, it was a physical hurt to hear at long intervals that wailing call of 'Pape-e-r,' and have none to throw to the men who starved for news."

All the world over—not only in lonely places, but in cities, towns and villages—are human hearts "hungry for news"; the news that will tell them how the guilt of sin may be cancelled, and strong temptation overcome, how sorrowing hearts may be comforted and assured of a home with God and loved ones lost, when this life is over. Sometimes they tell us how they feel; more often than not, they are too shy to express themselves.

And oh! What news we have to give! of the love of God and the power of Christ, and the promise of the Holy Spirit. News from Home—that is from God Himself, the heart's true resting-place. And the news might always be good, if only we were more faithful, more whole-hearted in fighting the battles of the Cross. Then there would always be news of success in every part of the Front. And soon would come the best news of all—that for which all our hearts should hunger—the glorious tidings that there is victory everywhere, and the weary warfare is over; for the Prince of Peace has conquered all His foes, and we are to share in the joy of His triumph.

86. Ignorance—the Cause and the Remedy.—"It won't make any difference to us if the Germans do come and conquer England; we'd as soon be under the Kaiser as the King." This kind of thing has often been said, sometimes by the very poor in the East End of London or some large provincial town, sometimes by people living in remote country districts.

The first impulse of one who has the patriotic instinct, when such miserable words are spoken, is to give vent to expressions of indignation and scorn against so low a conception of the duty and privilege of our English birthright. But a little reflection softens the hard and angry thoughts that rise so naturally. These people would never feel and speak as they do, if they had been properly taught to value their heritage as free-born citizens of the British Empire. They do not understand what invasion would mean, as they have never seen its bitter trail of blood and fire and outrage. Their mental outlook has been too limited for them to realize what the barbarous fruits of German materialism are like. They have in times past listened to the fervid orations of mob orators, whose only appeal has been to their selfish instincts. "Give us your votes and we'll show you how to get all you want"—this has been the stock political cry they have listened to. No call to duty, no presentment of the claims of others, no appeal to their sense of chivalry or love of country has ever been properly put before them. If they were educated in the history of the Empire and in the duties of citizenship they would think and speak very differently.

It would hardly be true to state that people ever say exactly, "We would as soon be under Satan as Christ; it makes no difference to us if the devil does get a hold of us." But many irreligious persons do say, "It makes no difference whether you are a Christian or not; one man is as good as another, even if he never says a prayer to God from one year's end to another."

Let us remember that many at least who talk in this way do so from ignorance; they have never understood what Christianity really is. They have listened to infidel lecturers pouring forth their blasphemous tirades against God and the Christian religion in some open space on a Sunday afternoon; or they have read in some low type of weekly newspaper the cheap sneers of its agnostic proprietor against the Church. If they were shown how wonderful a thing the love of God in Christ is, and how bright is the hope of the life hereafter to the soul that believes in Jesus, we should soon hear far less of that profane and foolish talking which is so repulsive to the devout and thoughtful mind.

87. Imperial Unity.—Hardly any episode in the war caused a greater feeling of pride and thankfulness in British hearts than the splendid loyalty and magnificent spirit of generosity with which our fellow-subjects in India volunteered their offerings of personal service and gold for the defence of the Empire. Wishing to know whether this feeling was genuine and widespread, or if the tales of disloyalty and disintegration so assiduously spread

by our enemies had a foundation in fact, the correspondent of an Italian newspaper got among our Indian soldiers, on their way to the North of France, and conversed with them. To one of these he said, "Do you like coming here to a country which is not yours—France?—at the bidding of another country—England—which oppresses you?" The Indian soldier replied indignantly: "India is not oppressed by any one; she is a part, and not a small part, of a great Empire. So the Indians are not slaves of the Empire, but subjects, like the English, the Scotch, and the Irish. The British Empire is threatened by Germany; and to defend herself, she has appealed to all her subjects. If the Empire were threatened in India, the English troops would have gone there; but as it is threatened in Europe, we have come here." Then he added, in accents of profound pride, "We are English!"

What an answer was there to the misrepresentations and false suggestions of our unscrupulous foe!

There is an Empire greater and wider still; more beneficent in its rule; more comprehensive in its sway over the diverse races of East and West. It is the Kingdom of God on earth. Its enemies are many and subtle, cruel and mendacious. They never cease to bring forward their slanderous accusations against Jesus our King; and, wherever they can, to suggest doubt and foster unbelief and sow the seeds of discord in the minds of those who share in the blessings of His great salvation. Let none be led astray by these emissaries of Satan, whether

they be spiritual, or whether they come disguised in human form. Like that Indian soldier let us be armed with a knowledge of the truth. Learn to say, "Our Christian religion is no oppression; we are not the slaves of a system that would rob life of its joys. Rather have we been set free from the slavery of sin; and, whatever our difference in race or colour or speech, we hold one faith and one hope; we are all the children of one Father; fellow-heirs in the privileges of a common citizenship, which is eternal in the Heavens. United we stand here; together shall we reign hereafter."

88. The Incarnation.—"Before the Tsar passed the uniform for the common soldier in the War, he commanded that a complete suit be sent to him, and with it boots and rifle and full kit. And he himself put off his royal clothes, and put on the soldier's uniform, and shouldered the kit and the gun, and walked in them on his estate in Livadia some two hours. He was photographed so, and has allowed the photograph to be reproduced for common sale and for distribution among the soldiers. The Tsar inherits the awful power of his ancestors, but he is a simple man and would like to spend a day as a common soldier in the trenches. Such an action would resound throughout history and win the hearts of the whole non-German world. But necessarily the Tsar is to the peasants some one unearthly, a giant, a demi-god. They would not really be well influenced by such an action, probably would not

understand it. Still, who knows? Noble deeds take care of themselves."[1]

There is here a parable of something far greater and grander still. Jesus Christ the Son of God, putting off his royal robes, clothed himself in human flesh like ours; as a simple man taking upon Himself our human nature, not for a brief while only but for all time and eternity. In the four Gospels we have a photograph of Him as He walked among the men He came to save. Into the very gates of death itself He went, and there laid down His life for us—the free-will offering of a spotless humanity, pure from any taint of sin. By His victory over the grave, He has insured for us a resurrection from the dead. This act of great condescension, with its power to redeem and sanctify the human race, ought to be proclaimed to every nation and should win the hearts of the whole world.

89. Inconsistency.—When the demand for recruits was urgent, many of the taxi-cabs in London adopted the device of putting across their front in large capital letters a call to arms; such as "Your King and country need you."

One day, as I was driving through the City, I saw one of these taxis, bearing the inscription, DUTY CALLS YOU (with a dash of emphasis under the YOU).

Seated behind this was the driver of the car—a hearty fresh-faced young man, leaning back com-

[1] *Russia and the World*, by Stephen Graham (Cassell), p. 163.

fortably, and looking quite satisfied with himself. My eyes turned from the words to the man behind them ; and I felt I should like to say to him, " What about yourself ? You blazon out the call of duty to others, but you are not acting on the principle you proclaim ; you are a shirker." Is not that very often done elsewhere, and in other ways ? The preacher of Christ's gospel especially—let him beware of the awful inconsistency of calling others to a life of faith and service, while he is leading the self-indulgent and pleasure-seeking or merely self-interested life.

90. Indignation—Ill-balanced.—The use of poisonous gas by which our gallant soldiers were cruelly choked to death, and the torpedoing of the *Lusitania* by which so many hundreds of innocent victims were foully murdered, caused widespread indignation throughout the country and so incensed the people living in the East End of London and also in some other large towns, that the mob broke the windows and destroyed the property of those poor little shopkeepers who happened to be Germans by birth, some of whom actually had their sons fighting for England. It was a cruel, senseless thing to do on the part of those who gave way to a foolish ebullition of wrath, which they vented by punishing the wrong persons.

This is a common failing with some people. Their indignation is aroused by some wrong which may be quite real ; their emotions are stirred and excited ; they give way to irritability ; and this is followed by an outburst of temper against some one remotely

connected with the cause of their annoyance. In such cases, the lack of self-control often entails misery and discomfort on the whole family life and frequently becomes the cause of estrangement. When such injustice is shown by professing Christians, it becomes a grave stumbling-block to the non-religious.

91. Intercessory Prayer.—People who live in the safe shelter of home-life realize but feebly and imperfectly, for the most part, how greatly their prayers are valued by those who are in far-off lands, enduring hardships and facing danger. Sometimes they tell us how they look homewards for help of this kind. Here are some outstanding testimonies :—

(1) Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, writing to his brother, a clergyman, said : "We need your prayers ; it is good to know we get them. I think this war may do good in making people less luxurious and selfish, and in leading people's thoughts to higher things."

(2) The Archbishop of York said : "Prayer at the base, here at home, sends its strength to the men at the Front. Here are the words written to me this week by one of the generals serving in the long battle of the Aisne : 'We are doing our best for the old country ; and I know that you and hosts of others never forget us in your prayers ; and that in itself is an immense—indeed the greatest possible —comfort and stimulus.'"

(3) An Army Chaplain wrote from the Front to the Bishop of Ely : "The knowledge that your

prayers will be with us, as we face danger and death, will be a help and comfort to us all. In South Africa during the late war every night, when we were not fighting or marching, we had service in my brigade; and to us then the consciousness that thousands in England were with us in prayer was a help beyond words."

How sad to think that some of those who are giving their lives for us have been looking in vain for the help we might have given! How inspiring is the assurance that they do value our prayers, and actually lean upon us for the strength we can obtain for them! How great is the privilege of sharing with them in upholding the freedom and honour of the Empire!

92. Jesus Christ—able to Keep.—Mr. H. J. Lane, of the Y.M.C.A., had a message sent to him from a lad who was fighting on Hill 60, near Ypres. It was this: "Tell Mr. Lane that Jesus Christ is able to keep me in perfect peace even in this mouth of hell."

Was not that a grand testimony to the reality of the Christian religion? There was more actual personal experience of God packed into that one brief sentence than in whole volumes of some theological treatises that have issued from the Press. Some people might read that lad's message, or listen to it when used in a sermon, and set it down to the momentary excitement of an emotional temperament. That would be their mistake, showing only their complete ignorance of real religion and of the

power of Christ in a soul that is conscious of His presence. When they who hunger and thirst after righteousness have their desire satisfied, they shall know that even in the darkest hour that glorious promise of old is true, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." [1]

93. Justice and Mercy.—On November 6, 1914, Hans Lody, the German spy, was shot at the Tower of London. The day before his sentence was executed he wrote to his relations at Stuttgart a letter which was afterwards published in the *Cologne Gazette*. In it he says, "The Supreme Court-Martial of London has sentenced me to death for Military Conspiracy. To-morrow I shall be shot here in the Tower. It is a consolation to me that I am not treated as a spy. *I have had just judges;* and I shall die as an officer, not as a spy."

It was a striking confession for such a man to make at such a time. He knew and admitted that his trial had been fairly conducted—"I have had just judges." And yet their justice was tempered with mercy. So strong was the evidence against him as one who had plotted against the well-being of a country whose hospitality he was enjoying, that they were in judicial honour bound to convict him. But they spared him as much as they possibly could, treating him not as a common spy, but as a Military Conspirator.

The day will come when we shall all be arraigned before the bar of Eternal Judgment. Upon each

[1] Isaiah xxvi. 3.

one separately will be passed the sentence of acquittal or condemnation. Mercy will be shown to all, we may be sure. But where the guilt of any man is clear in the searchlight of Divine omniscience (unless repented of and cleansed away by the atoning Blood of Christ), Justice must vindicate the law of Eternal Righteousness. Each one of us will then see ourselves as we are, and know the extent of all the wrong we have done in this life. And however severe may be the sentence passed on any man, he will know that it is just; and he will have to own, "I have had a just Judge." Happy are they who wait not until that day to look into the Judge's face as they stand before the throne, but at the foot of His Cross have knelt, and are now looking to Him as their Saviour and Friend. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

94. Knowledge—Now and Hereafter.—From the commencement of the War, right on, week by week, histories of the events in progress were written, and the public were solicited to buy and store up for future reading these memorials of stirring incidents compiled at the time of their actual occurrence. In one notable instance, the inducement was added, "For your children's children." This particular publication was very well got up; the type was good, and the drawings were graphic. No doubt, great care was exercised to describe everything as accurately as possible. But what will be the verdict of "your children's children" in the years to come, when you proudly take down from your shelves

these delightful volumes in their attractive binding, as a storehouse of thrilling interest for the grandchildren ?

I think some of them will find out a good many mistakes then, because they will have read history-books written in the clearer perspective of later years. At the present time we know so little of what is really happening. There is much concealment of actual facts, which are purposely suppressed for diplomatic or tactical reasons. And besides, the accounts given in the Press of the belligerent nations are hopelessly contradictory. We cannot now form a true judgment of all that is being done. We must wait until the war is over before we can fully understand. There is a like principle in the experience of us all ; and they are wise who recognize this fact. We are apt to misinterpret incidents which happen to-day, because they are only in the bud ; we cannot see their future unfolding. For wise and loving reasons God hides from our view the full import of many things. We often magnify passing trifles, and make too little of events which are really charged with great sequences. When tempted in the hour of trouble to give way to depression, let us remember that all our knowledge now is partial, and many of our hardest trials are barriers between us and some greater misfortune hidden from our view. "For now we see through a glass darkly ; [1] but then face to face. Now I know in part ; but then shall I know even as I am known."[2]

[1] The Greek is "through a mirror, in a dark saying."
[2] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

95. Lifebelts.—On the platform at Euston Station, among the survivors of the *Lusitania* who had come on to London by the Irish Mail, were several who had kept their life-belts. One of these, when asked for an account of his experiences, lifted a belt up, and said, " That tells the story." On one side of the belt he had written in ink in large letters, " R.M.S. *Lusitania*, May 7, 1915. Off Ireland. Torpedoed 2.15 p.m." He said that he would keep the belt as long as he lived.

We may be sure he will often show it to others—perhaps to his children and grandchildren ; and he will tell them all about it. We can think we hear him saying, " When I was in great danger, this belt saved my life ; but for its timely and unfailing support I should certainly have sunk beneath the cold waves. When my own strength availed me nothing it proved itself a sure stay. To it I clung, and upon it I rested. Never can I forget or become weary of telling what it did for me."

Amongst us there are many who can recall the time when we were struck by some sudden calamity —a heavy loss in business, a severe illness, grave anxiety about some loved one, or the heavier trial of a cruel bereavement. We passed through deep waters then ; the waves and billows rolled over our head ; our faith was in peril of shipwreck ; our reason was well-nigh gone. And then we found ourselves clinging to some welcome life-belt—some statement or promise of God on which we rested and to which we clung. It may have been this—" Underneath are the everlasting arms," or " My

peace I give unto you," or "Be not afraid, only believe." And in the strength of a great deliverance, faith and reason alike were saved.

That message from the Lord in His Word has always been precious to us since then. But do we honour Him by telling others what He did for us—by opening our Bible, and laying our finger on the place, and saying, "That verse helped me when I sorely needed help?" It is not easy for reserved natures to do this. And yet it is not right to keep our cherished life-belt always stored away out of sight, locked up in some drawer of memory, never shown to those who would love to see it and who might themselves be helped by its message.

96. Lighthouses and Lightships.—Soon after the war broke out, by order of the Admiralty, the lighthouses and lightships along the coast and in the North Sea ceased to burn their lights by night or to sound their sirens during a fog.

What a deprivation that must have been to those who "do business in great waters!" Hitherto they had relied for guidance on the friendly beams of light that shone through the darkness of cloudy nights; they had counted for safety in thick weather on the warning blast of the fog-horn. And now, just when they are threatened with new forms of sudden danger and disaster from the foe who discards all the laws of honour and chivalry in war, their old friends the lighthouse and lightship fail them.

True; but there is a reason for it, and a good one

too. It is just because of the crafty and cruel enemy that the merchant-ships of England and of neutral countries have to do without those aids to safe navigation which they used to enjoy. For that which helped them once would help the enemy now. It was to hinder German warships in their raids upon our coast that the Admiralty issued its order. The darkness and the mists of ocean are our true allies now; while shining beacons and loud-mouthed sirens would only aid the enemy in their swift rush across the North Sea, intent on shelling defenceless towns and villages, or in their dastardly attempts to lay mines in the open fair-way. But, for the ships passing to and fro on lawful business, there are plenty of ports or bights of calm water sheltered by stretches of sandbanks where they can rest at anchor by night or while the fog is on the sea. And that is just what they do.

There comes a time in the experience of most among us, when the light of our eyes ceases to shine, and some voice of warning or counsel we had learned to value is silenced, either by distance, or estrangement, or death. And in the darkness of sorrow or the mists of doubt and uncertainty, we miss the comfort and strength and joy they once afforded us so freely and unfailingly. And most likely, we can see no reason why we should thus suffer. Try to believe that there is some good purpose in it all. And when the darkness falls, turn for shelter and safety to that haven of rest which is always open and always near—the love of God in Jesus Christ.

97. Looking on the Bright Side.—The Bishop of

Pretoria, preaching as an old Etonian at Eton College Chapel,[1] paid a warm tribute to the splendid spirit of our soldiers, especially their wonderful cheerfulness. He said: "I think of a man I saw this day week in hospital; a young officer terribly broken up; he had one leg off, and the other was very badly smashed. He was lying in bed as I took the Blessed Communion round the ward early in the morning. He had a smile on his face; and when some one condoled with him in his plight, he said: 'You know, it is indeed extraordinary good luck. I had made up my mind, when this war was over, to be a parson, if I was good enough; and you see I can be a parson, I suppose, with one leg!'"

What a contrast that is to the querulous complaints of those who grumble over trifling disappointments, and murmur about some passing infirmity! And how different life becomes if we look on the bright side, and make the best of things! "Mirth is a medicine"; and there are very few people, indeed, whose case is so bad, that they cannot face their troubles with a brave face and, sometimes at least, wring from them the occasion of a bright smile or a bit of humour.

98. Love of Humanity.—Prince Yussopoff came to London on a special mission from the Tsar. He was interviewed by the representative of the *Daily Mail*; and in the course of conversation, commenting on the wonderful spirit of humanitarianism which, he declared, animated the Russian people, he said:

[1] May 23, 1915.

"I will tell you a story within my own knowledge. A Russian wounded man was in an Austrian field-hospital. His mother was allowed to go to him. She not only nursed him, but, no less devotedly, she nursed the wounded Austrians. She was typical of all the Russian people in this way. They simply want to do their human duty—to their country first, and then to their enemy." [1]

Was she not also typical of true hearts everywhere? Certainly of all those who have learned the love of God and have caught the spirit of Christ. True love begins at home, but it never ends there. Its choicest fragrance and sweetest fruits are kept for those who have the first claim on its purest and most unselfish instincts.

The love that flows from the heart of a new humanity in Jesus Christ will always think first of its own dear treasures. And from them it will spread, until its rays of light and warmth reach and touch with healing power even the bitter foes of the truth by which it lives, and from which it has learned its holy and heavenly lessons.

99. Loyalty Confessed.—When King George was with his army in France, he paid an unexpected visit to the Convalescent Camp of the Indian soldiers. When His Majesty was recognized, a sepoy rose from his bed and called out, "God save the King." It was all the English he knew; and the act was quite unrehearsed. The special corre-

[1] *Daily Mail*, January 28, 1915.

spondent who records this added, "The spontaneous tribute of the men in this tent may perhaps have been more affecting to His Majesty than all the applause of a Royal procession."

How very little of the English language that wounded sepoy knew! He had somehow learned just enough to express his loyalty; and when the occasion arose, in the unexpected presence of his King, out it came, naturally; and his enthusiasm infected the other Indian soldiers.

In the great army of the King of kings, with its varied ranks and degrees, there are men of humble origin and small attainments and very slight knowledge. They have only learned a little of the language of Christian thought and sentiment; but what they do know is in honour of the Saviour-King. And when they become conscious, by that flash of illumination which is the gift of the Holy Spirit, that Jesus Himself is in their midst, they cannot help speaking out. What they say may be very simple —just the A B C of Christian experience—but it comes from their hearts and is very real. Whatever may be thought and said of them by men of cultured minds and refined speech, their honest words of love and loyalty must be pleasing to the Lord Whom they are trying to honour. And from them we might all learn to confess Christ before men with more courage and devotion.

100. Loyalty in Humble Hearts.—Writing home from one of Britain's new colonies, a naval lieutenant told of a native who had been wounded out there in

battle. He had been shot just above the heart, and "When I raised him to dress the wound, with a smile on his face, he said, 'For King George.'"

That poor simple-minded native scarcely knew what he was fighting for. He must have had but a vague dim idea of England's King; but somehow in his humble way, deep in his heart there beat the feeling of loyalty to the Sovereign whose uniform he had been wearing but a short time. The naval officer used the story as an appeal to his countrymen in the Homeland. They live so much nearer to their King, and know so much better than their humble fellow-subject in that far-off outpost of the Empire how much we all owe, in our heritage of centuries, to a wise and just rule, and therefore ought to be doubly willing to lay down their lives in the service of their King and country.

The narrative illustrates a principle that is still higher. In the ranks of those who have by baptism been enrolled as soldiers and servants of our Divine King and Saviour Jesus Christ are many whose position is very lowly and obscure. With few natural advantages and little or no education, compelled to live amid squalor and vice, exposed to the many temptations of such an environment, not much could be expected of them, but much is often given. Their unquestioning faith, and pure life, and wealth of love and devotion to the very name of Jesus, should be a challenge to us, with our far greater advantages social and spiritual, to do more than we have yet learned how, for Him Who has

done so much for us. "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."[1]

101. A Message for sad Hearts.—In the obituary column of *The Times* of July 15, 1915, appeared the following: "Killed in action, on the 30th June, in Flanders, Lance-Corp. Kenneth Seymour Boyd, No. 2 Comp. 1st Batt. Hon. Artillery Comp., the dearly beloved son of Alexander and Charlotte Boyd, of Lowestoft, aged 24. No mourning. His message after the action on June 16–17 was Psalm xxiii. 4."

How much there is to learn from this brief notice! It suggests the Christian home where human love is at its best because life is ruled by the fear of God. In obedience to the call of duty the young life is given—laid as a willing sacrifice on the altar of patriotism. In the battle of June 16–17 death looked that brave lad in the face; but he knew how to meet the look without flinching. He wanted those who loved and prayed for him at home to know how death should find him if he were to fall; and so he sent them this message: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" (Psa. xxiii. 4).

Then, when they received the sad news that he was killed on June 30, they were strengthened to bear the ill-tidings that have broken so many other hearts during this cruel war. In the notice of his death they added "No mourning." And this

[1] St. Luke xii. 48.

because they were enabled by faith to "see beyond the veil" through which he had passed. They knew that the ambitions he had cherished and the plans he had formed in this life were not ruthlessly destroyed, like crushed flowers that could never revive, but only changed and glorified into some more perfect fulfilment than they could have realized here below. And so they "sorrow not, even as others which have no hope."[1]

For they believe that as "Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

102. A Message from the Front.—At a Patriotic Meeting held in Dundee, June 6, 1915, Captain Leslie Boase, of the Black Watch, addressed the audience. He had come home wounded, and carried his left arm in a sling. "I have come to you here to-night," he said, "with a message from my comrades whom I have left at the Front. The message is this: '*Will you back us up?*'"

That is the message of every missionary home on furlough, from every pulpit and platform in the land, when he pleads his Master's Cause, which is his own. He represents that valiant army, who are spending the strength of their lives in fighting against sin and Satan in many a battle-field abroad. Their message to us all is, "Will you back us up?" What response are we making? Let the answer be an increase of prayer and sympathetic interest

[1] 1 Thess. iv. 13–15.

and generous self-denial in gifts of gold and silver, and, whenever possible, in personal service.

103. Mine-sweepers.—Living on the East Coast, and looking out daily over the North Sea, I have been amazed sometimes to see the merchant-ships which continue to ply up and down the coast, as numerous as in peace time—if not more so. How have they escaped the deadly mines so freely distributed in those waters—to say nothing of submarines? How have their owners dared to risk so much valuable property? How have they been able to find officers and crews willing to take the risks? With the exception of patrol boats, not many warships pass along here. No, but there is another arm of England's naval power that does protect them—the mine-sweepers, as they are called. In peace time these are simple fishing-craft—ordinary steam-trawlers, built for their calling on the Dogger Bank. Now they are employed to take an essential part in the protection of maritime commerce, they are manned for the most part by their old officers and crews, being under the orders of the Admiralty. Their work is to steam through the mine-fields, clearing the waters of these deadly engines of destruction; so keeping the coastwise channels free of mines dropped by the enemy. It is a very dangerous task; and many of these trawlers have been blown up, with serious loss of life. But that danger is faced by these brave men cheerfully, and no weather can deter them. They have none of the excitement of battle, and little to

gain, except perhaps a medal at the end of the war. We shall probably never know how much we—aye and all England—owe to them.[1]

They have their counterpart always, whether in times of war or peace. Many of the most faithful workers in the world are found in humble life, and are never known beyond their immediate surroundings. Far more than we are ever aware of, we are indebted for the necessaries and comforts of life to people whom we never see and whose names are little known outside the homes that are blessed by their presence. Their patience in well-doing, their unselfishness and good temper, their unfailing cheerfulness and Christian charity, the risks to health

[1] "More than once the courageous and gallant conduct of the fishermen engaged in mine-sweeping has been officially recognized. In February, 1915, there was issued a report on the clearing of the minefield laid by the Germans during their raid on Scarborough two months before, in which several officers and men were commended. Skipper T. Tringall, of the trawler *Solon*, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for having, on his own responsibility, gone to the assistance of a steamer which had been mined. It was on Christmas night, low water and very dark, and the stricken vessel was showing no lights, so had to be searched for in the minefield. Another Skipper, Thomas B. Belton, of the drifter *Retriever*, kept to his station, in order to mark a safe channel for shipping through the minefield, when all the other drifters were driven in by the weather. It is a striking tribute to the work of the men sweeping for mines—to the iron nerves of the fishermen—that in the Dardanelles, without ever the chance of hitting back, they fulfilled the duty of clearing the mined areas and proved themselves indispensable to the operations of the Fleet."—*The Times*, July 2, 1915.

which they often incur for the sake of those whom they are serving—these things are never blazoned on the public records of the world's heroes; but none the less do they deserve that higher recognition which shall be accorded to all true and faithful hearts in the life beyond.

104. The Mistakes we make.—The engagement had been fought, the enemy had ceased firing, and the victory was just won, when a rifle-ball struck a young English officer, and he fell, to die where he had been standing. Probably some German soldier at the moment prided himself on seeing how true had been his aim. He may have been a kind-hearted simple-minded man, thinking only how well he had served the Fatherland by putting out of action one more of the "detestable English." He little knew. That young life he had taken was singularly noble and beautiful. That officer was an only son. His father and mother are both living. He was their pride and joy. Had he been spared to come home after the war, his sweet nature and fine character would have helped and strengthened and comforted many. The German soldier who sniped him knew nothing of that. Perhaps, if he knew now, he would give his right arm rather than have pulled the trigger for that last shot. He will never know in this life. He will doubtless learn hereafter.

We are only doing in our way what he did in his way; and some of us have done so continually. The headstrong course of action, the impulsive

deed, the self-assertive word on which we prided ourselves and wherein we thought we were doing finely for the cause we had espoused—Ah! we little know or guess how grievously we injured the soul of another, how cruelly we hurt some tender heart, how great a stumbling-block we put in the way of someone seeking the road to the Kingdom.

How can we be saved from such mistakes, and such wrongs unwittingly wrought? In one way and in one only—by prayer. Ask God, Who knows all, every day of your life, not to let you do what is wrong or unwise. Ask Him for more of His own spirit of love. You will not know now, but you will learn hereafter, how He has answered your prayers, by staying your hand, or your tongue, or your foot, from hurting some brother, or sister, or mother.

105. Mothers and Sons.—When the news was broken to a mother that her son had been killed, she said in the midst of her tears, "It's good so to die. I would not have my son shield himself behind other mothers' sons."

Let those other mothers think of these words. And let each one ask herself this question: "Which will be best in the end for my boy—to forget his self-respect and to live an ignoble life under the shelter of lives nobly defending home and country, an object of contempt in the eyes of all whose good opinion is worth having? or to take the risk, and, if need be, to die for the cause of righteousness, liberty and truth?" The true mother will make the sacrifice, knowing it is the better

choice of the two. And she and her son together may reverently accept for themselves the Master's words, "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.[1]

106. A Nail in a sure Place.[2]—I got into conversation one day in a railway carriage with a soldier. He belonged to the National Reservists, being a middle-aged man. I soon found him to be thoughtful and observant about affairs in general. He said one thing which is certainly worth passing on: "When I was a boy, I knew an old man, who used to say, 'If ever England lose her faith in God, she will have to come off her peg.'" The Reservist added, "I can't call myself religious, but I am quite sure that old man was right."

Yes; the history of nations, especially of the Jews, proves that beyond question. It is also true of families. Where God has been recognized and honoured in past generations, there has been a corresponding blessing in the prosperity, the character and the respect in which the family name is held. Where it is an understood thing that "JESUS CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THIS HOUSE," there you will find happiness and peace, with the mutual confidence and love which gives security to all and ensures help for the needy or the erring who may fall. But where God's past mercies are forgotten, His worship forsaken, His word neglected,

[1] St. John xii. 25. [2] Isaiah xxii. 23.

His presence ignored, misfortune and disaster are sure to overtake the apostates.

107. The National Anthem.—The third verse of "God save the King" has been a stumbling-block to some good people. And when called on to join in the public singing of our National Anthem, their tender feelings have rebelled against the lines,

> "Confound their politics,
> Frustrate their knavish tricks."

They have allowed that our forefathers, in the rough old times, might have been pardoned for the use of such strong language; but nowadays it is a breach of Christian charity.

Is it? Or has the great war put the matter in another light? At a meeting of the Church of Ireland Synod in Dublin the question was discussed, and a motion to have this third verse printed in the Hymnal was carried with eleven dissentients. Dean Ovenden[1] said that when he read of the orders of Admiral Von Tirpitz, and when he thought of the cruel and remorseless way in which the German submarines torpedoed merchant vessels with their non-combatant crews and civilian passengers, including missionaries, women and children, who were sent, without pity and sometimes without warning, to a watery grave, he prayed with all his heart that "their knavish tricks" might be "frustrated." To this we may further add that, when we hear of calculated preparations for the wholesale use of asphyxiating gases and the poisoning of wells

[1] Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.

in S. W. Africa, in contravention of the Hague Convention and in violation of Germany's signature thereto, and when we read of the policy of "frightfulness" and of the "reprisals" deliberately carried out by the German State and its army on British officers who are helpless prisoners in their hands, we may, without copying their "Hymn of Hate," ask the God of love and justice to "Confound[1] their politics." Strong language, like strong measures, is sometimes necessary to express what is true. And while in these days we sing the controverted words of our National Anthem, let us also breathe an inward prayer that our enemies may be forgiven and brought to a better state of mind and heart.

108. Navy and Army.—Everyone knows, in some degree at least, what England owes to the magnificent courage and devotion to duty of that brave Army which, in conjunction with our Allies, has for so long a time held back the German menace in France and Flanders. Not a day has passed without stories reaching us of heroic deeds of valour and self-sacrifice.

On the other hand, how very little have we heard of the doings of our Grand Fleet in the North Sea! Very few people even know where these ships are. Every now and then the curtain which obscures them is raised, and we get a momentary glimpse of some daring attack skilfully planned and dauntlessly carried out in the Bight of Heligoland, or of a German raiding attempt on our East Coast towns

[1] "Confound" (A word of Latin derivation) signifies "to bring to confusion," or "bring to nought."

frustrated and the squadron ignominiously flying back to the shelter of its mine-fields pursued hotly by our British cruisers. And then the veil of secrecy and silence covers their movements again. But who can say how much we owe to the ceaseless vigil and untiring patience of the splendid men who make up the commanders, officers and crews of the Sentinel Fleet? If it had not been for them, German transports full of soldiers, with all their munitions of war, would long ago have landed on our shores and wreaked their hatred of us in fire and blood and outrage through the length and breadth of our dear land, as their comrades desolated poor Belgium. When the war is over and the whole truth becomes known, we shall learn that we owe at least as much to our Navy as to our Army.

They who do God's work in the world, giving up their lives to promote the happiness and defend the highest interests of their fellow-men, may also be said to be made up of two Services. There are those whose labours are well-known, because they are by circumstances placed in positions of prominence. Their efforts are understood and appreciated and talked of and written about. And there are the others—men and women of saintly character—whose pure unselfish lives make up a grand sum-total of good, rich in blessing, forming a bulwark against sin and suffering to a degree little known by most people. Every now and then the veil is lifted for a moment, and our eyes are gladdened and our pulses stirred by the sight of quiet heroism or noble self-sacrifice in humble life. But only

when this world's warfare is over shall we know fully how great is the debt we owe and how large a share of gratitude and love we should render to these quiet, retiring, obscure "Defenders of the Faith."

109. Necessity,—*Saeva Necessitas* (Cruel Necessity) was one of the imaginary deities of the old Roman poetic fancy—a goddess with the look of set cruelty on her face, and her hands full of nails and wedges to tear and cleave asunder all human efforts.

In every age, the poet's fancy has been a grim reality. It is said that when Lord Southampton and a friend were keeping watch in the Banqueting House at Whitehall by the body of their dead King (Charles I), a man with his face muffled in the cloak he wore "entered the room, approached the body, considered it very attentively for some time, shook his head, and then sighed out the words 'Cruel Necessity.'" From his voice and gait they judged the intruder to be Oliver Cromwell.

When the Imperial Chancellor announced to the German Reichstag the violation of Belgium's neutrality, he admitted that "it was wrong," but he pleaded in justification the "Law of Necessity."

There are, however, two other laws, which, in her selfish arrogance and ambition, Germany left out of her calculations. These are the law of Moral Right, and the law of Retribution. In disregarding the first of these, she has placed herself under the power of the second. And even already she has

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felt the first heavy drops falling of the gathering storm of her doom, in the fearful cost of human life and material she has paid, and in the bankruptcy of her good name among neutral nations. On the horizon of the more distant future, dark clouds are surely gathering.

As with the nation, so is it with each one who pleads "necessity" for doing a wrong act. The man who commits robbery with violence, the dishonest lawyer or trustee who misappropriates money entrusted to him, when found out and put on his trial, usually makes this excuse. He was "in financial difficulties," and "hard necessity" drove him to commit the criminal act. But that excuse is never allowed in any Court of Justice on earth worthy of the name. Some men never do get found out on this side of the grave. Let them think of the other side, before it be too late. For every one who violates the law of Moral Right and thereby wrongs another, there is only one way of escaping the law of eternal Retribution; and that is the way of Repentance which leads to the Cross of Christ, where, if the repentance be sincere, if reparation as far as possible be made for the injury done to others, the law of Divine Love will remit the sentence of guilt through the Atonement made by the Saviour for the sinner.

110. Neutrality — sometimes Questionable. — "In a war for righteousness, such as the Allies are now waging, American neutrality may become criminality. . . . We cannot, surely, be neutral,

while inhumanity and murder are being carried on under our eyes and to our very own."

These are the words of Dr. Malcom McLeod, one of America's foremost preachers. Thoughtful people in England have understood the difficulties of the United States. Nations do not—nor should they—go to war lightly. But there are times when the national conscience cannot allow self-interests or expediency to restrain it from brave speech and daring action.

The same thing is true of the Church. In a country like ours, ruled by Party Government, Christian leaders are, as a rule, wise to abstain from joining actively in politics. But there are times when such neutrality would mean disloyalty to the principles of truth and righteousness. If legislation threatens the foundations of religion by taking the Bible from our schools, or by increasing facilities for divorce, or by robbing the Church of endowments inherited from her pious forefathers, then the duty of the Church is quite clear. The conscience of Christian men compels them to throw in their lot with that party in the State which is fighting for the cause of Christian liberty and progress. To stand on one side while the wrong is being perpetrated would be an actual sin.

111. Neutrals.—On the outbreak of war, one question for a time held the first place in the minds of thoughtful people—"What will Italy do?" She was not long in answering it. Although a member of the Triple Alliance, she refused to go

partners with Germany and Austria in their war of aggression. Once before, Italy had declined to countenance their ambitious schemes for attacking and absorbing a small people—Serbia. So Italy stood on one side as a Neutral. But the national aspirations of her people for the "Redemption" of their lost provinces, and the voice of conscience crying out against the cynical policy and barbarous methods of war so ruthlessly pursued by the Teutonic nations, would not be quenched or silenced. Resisting alike the veiled threats and proffered bribes of Berlin and Vienna, after nearly ten months of indecision, Italy came out fearlessly and wholeheartedly on the side of the nations who were fighting for the sacred cause of Liberty, Freedom, and Conscience. She will have to pay the price of courage and duty. But the end will surely justify her decision. She has kept her honour bright. The future now holds out for her prospects worthy of the most glorious traditions of her past.

Between nations and individual men we may often see striking analogies. So it is here. By the force of circumstances a man has grown up amidst evil surroundings, and has for a time been a partner with those who "feared not God nor regarded man." The better part of his nature revolted, and he cleared himself by degrees from these old associations. He is now a neutral. But when he listens to an earnest sermon, or watches the consistent life of some out-and-out Christian, the voice of conscience within tells him that he should go further than he has yet done and cross the boundary-line

between religious neutrality and a whole-hearted surrender to the service of Christ.

Other nations besides Italy still remain neutral. In their hearts they sympathize with the Allies who are fighting for the liberation of Europe. We too sympathize with the difficulties of their position. Some day perhaps they may see their way to follow the example of Italy. But to every man who is at present content with a benevolent neutrality towards the Christian Faith, we say, "The only way in which you can obtain the 'Redemption' of all that you lost when Adam fell, and by which you can achieve God's great purposes of happiness and usefulness, is by abandoning neutrality and embracing the Cross with its present shame and suffering, and its assured hope of final victory."

112. A Noble Example.—One of the finest examples of devotion to duty, springing from a patriotic spirit, was shown by Mr. W. G. C. Gladstone, M.P., a grandson of the famous Prime Minister of that name, and Squire of Hawarden. He was Lord-Lieutenant of Flintshire when the war broke out; but later on he decided that it was his duty to offer himself for foreign service. He received a commission as second lieutenant in the Welsh Fusiliers. After three days in the trenches, he was shot in the forehead and killed instantly while on a parapet of the trench endeavouring to locate a sniper.[1] From the trenches he had written a letter to his mother, in which he said: "Really you

[1] April 13, 1915.

will be wrong if you regret my going, for I am very glad and proud to have got to the Front. *It is not the length of existence that counts, but what is achieved during that existence, however short.*" [1]

Those words breathe the spirit of the true knightly English gentleman. It was the spirit which lifted him above the temptation which often proves too strong for the ignoble man. Mr. Gladstone was the bearer of an honoured name, the heir of great family traditions, in possession of lands and money. He had a seat in Parliament, where his brilliant gifts, his fine sense of honour, and his large-minded statesmanship had marked him out for great distinction in public life. And yet he gave it all up, because his nature was too noble to allow personal ease or ambition to keep him back, when duty called him to hardship and danger. Why should we not all, in our humble way and station of life, cultivate the same spirit? The call of duty comes to some in strange ways, and with startling unexpectedness. For the Christian it may be a call to give up home comforts and attractive prospects and to go and preach the Gospel in some far-off heathen land. Let each one remember the words of Hawarden's hero, "It is not the length of existence that counts, but what is achieved during that existence, however short."

113. One in Christ.—In the *Westminster Gazette*, early in November, 1914, appeared the following ex-

[1] This sentence is inscribed as the Epitaph on a tablet to his memory in Hawarden Church.

tracts from a letter written by a soldier at the Front, who was also a soldier in the Salvation Army :—

"We were expecting any moment to be told that the German guns would have to be silenced, and presently along the line came the order 'Charge!' We scrambled into the open and rushed forward, met by a perfect hail of bullets. Many of our men bit the dust, but we who remained came to grips with the enemy. I cannot write of what happened then. The killing of men is a ghastly business!

"On the way back to the trenches I saw a poor German soldier trying to get at his water-bottle. He was in a fearful condition. I knelt down by his side. Finding his own water-bottle was empty, I gave him water from mine. Somewhat revived, he opened his eyes, and saw my Salvation Army button. His drawn face lit up with a smile, and he whispered in broken English, 'Salvation Army? I also am a Salvation soldier.' Then he felt for his Army badge. It was still pinned to his coat, though bespattered with blood.

"I think we both shed a few tears; and then I picked up his poor broken body, and with as much tenderness as possible (for the terrible hail of death was beginning again) I carried him to the ambulance. But he was beyond human aid. When I placed him on the wagon, he gave a gentle tug at my coat. Thinking he wanted to say something, I bent low and listened, and he whispered, 'Jesus, safe with Jesus!'"

How the love of Christ breaks through all the barriers of human differences and national enmities! Like the water that quenched his feverish thirst

from the bottle of the English soldier, so did the refreshing grace of Jesus Christ give comfort and peace to that poor German soldier in the hour of his extreme agony.

114. Party-Spirit.—One of the gravest dangers by which England was at one time threatened arose from within her own borders. It was the strange inability of many people to understand the desperate nature of the struggle for life in which the Empire was engaged. It was indeed said by some that the nation as a whole failed to realize that we were at war. This was shown in the undue importance attached to matters of local or merely personal interest. It was painfully evident in the labour disputes, and particularly in the strike of engineers on the Clyde, where the munitions of war so urgently required by the Army and Navy were held up, while masters and men quarrelled about questions of profits and wages. Referring to this in a powerful speech he made at the time, Mr. Lloyd George said, "It is intolerable that the lives of Britons should be imperilled for the matter of a farthing an hour."

Were these disputants wanting in patriotism? They certainly showed more zeal for their own personal and class interests than for the honour and welfare of their country.

The Church of Christ is at war in the world. But many Christians fail to realize that it is war! or to understand the deadly nature of the struggle going on between holiness and sin, between virtue and

vice, between goodness and crime. The story of the early centuries has been repeated again and again. Even in our own day bitter controversy—too often about things of secondary if not trifling importance—has divided into hostile camps men who ought to be united in one common purpose. The power of the Holy Spirit is needed to enlighten the eyes of our understanding, until we see things in their true proportions. If there were more of the love of Christ in all our hearts, there would be less party-spirit in the Church. We should forget our petty differences in the burning desire to storm the strongholds of sin both at home and also in those other lands where Satan holds his captives bound. May none of us fail, through passion, pride, or prejudice, to realize that, because we are Christians, we belong to a Church that is at war—a war not within the fold of the Good Shepherd between the flocks among themselves—but against the wild beasts outside, of tyranny and wrong, of cruelty and selfishness, of nameless and hideous vices, of unbelief and devil-worship.

115. Past Traditions maintained.—A captain of the Lincolnshire Regiment wrote home: "One cannot help noticing the wonderful way in which the old regiments that originally came out in the Expeditionary Force still stick to it. They have suffered, and suffered enormously, as was bound to happen. They have had fresh blood out, week after week, to fill the gaps in the ranks; and still they go on cheerfully, determined that though

both the officers and the men are changed, the old spirit has not; the old *esprit de corps* is present, and is to remain safe in the keeping of those to whom it has been bequeathed."

Let the Church here learn a lesson from the Army. As time goes on, her ranks are continuously thinned by death, and new blood comes in to take the place of the old. A church or parish, like a regiment, has its traditions of the past. Wherever these are good and true, let those who fill up the gaps caused by removal in any way respect the old order of things. Let the preacher endeavour faithfully to proclaim the Gospel message which has won to Christ and built up in His service the souls of men and women whose children still need the same way of salvation, the same source of power for holiness. Let Church officials and Sunday School teachers also feel that a share in the same burden of responsibility rests on them. To every one is bequeathed some portion of the legacy of that "faith which worketh by love." The spirit of Christian charity and generous appreciation of others will always help to keep the fire burning on the old hearth.

116. Patriotism and Heaven.—The great Russian novelist Nikolai Gogol (1809–1852), in one of his works, represents an exile as crying out to his country thus: "What is the mysterious and inscrutable power which lies hidden in you? Why does your aching and melancholy song echo unceasingly in my ears? Russia, what do you want of me? What is there between you and me?" And this

is the question, the author goes on to say, which is always repeated by Russians in exile.

Whatever the answer may be, the question itself is born of that strange instinct—patriotism; a thing which, in most hearts, takes the form of a noble and beautiful passion, but which may degenerate into a cruel and selfish ambition regardless of the rights of other nations, indifferent to the claims of a common humanity. The Russian exile turns with yearning in his heart towards his beloved country, saying, "Russia, what do you want of me?" When the Englishman abroad thinks of his native land, he knows what she wants of him—that she expects him to maintain her past traditions for courage, truth and honour, so that "parola Inglesa" may continue in other lands to be the proverb of the Briton's fealty to his plighted vow.

There is another kind of patriotism, higher and nobler still, of which the love of country here below is but a type and shadow. Whatever his earthly nationality may be, the Christian knows that he is an exile from his true home, a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven. If his thoughts and desires were put into language, would they not sometimes be, "What are the mysteries and what is the glory, now hidden from men, that shall one day be revealed in thy fullest light? Shall I ever indeed listen with raptured soul to the glad music of that song the angels sing? Heaven, what dost thou want of me? What is there between thee and me?"

And the answer is sure to come to him who waits

patiently and expectingly. "Be true to the teaching of the Heavenly Revelation; be ever loyal to the King of kings; let your life and conversation be such that all who know you may ask how they too can be enrolled as citizens of that dear Homeland in which all God's children shall one day find their rest."

117. Patriotism and Immortality.—"During the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, a young French soldier fell mortally wounded. When found afterwards, he had in his hand a paper on which he had scribbled his last words, and those words are now engraved on his tomb at Père-la-Chaise, near the spot where he died. I have not the exact words, but they are something like this: 'France, my country, I love you. I have given my life for you. Would that I could kiss away the blood from your wounds. I love you, France: take me for ever to your bosom.'"[1]

Was ever a more touching story than this recorded of intense patriotic fervour, of passionate love for country?

I believe we may see in it two principles, true and imperishable.

The one is that the soul which felt and was moved to utter words like those must be so far superior to the poor dying body which enshrined it as to compel the conviction of its immortality. For

[1] Told by Sir Robert Price, M.P., in the House of Commons, on November 11, 1914, when moving the address in reply to the King's speech.

how could so pure, so unselfish, so noble a thing be wasted and lost for ever, perishing like vapour, ere the senseless body had decayed in the tomb?

And the other great principle is that the patriotic spirit, which moves a man to lay down his life out of pure love for his country and to bless her with his dying breath, must be pleasing to Him Who alone can appraise things at their true worth. It is not that which can save any man. Nothing but the Blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse away sin. But may we not hope and believe that the virtue of His atoning sacrifice will avail for that man, and that a way of redemption will be found for him? Yes, and a place somewhere in that new and better country, where war and death are unknown, and where all, whatever their nationality on earth, are one in Christ by Whom alone they have a right to enter there.

118. Patriotism—of a Base Order.—Patriotism is a noble quality, a fine virtue, if it be not cultivated to the exclusion of other qualities and virtues. It may become a detestable thing—the parent of hideous evils. So it has become in Germany. The Prussian idea was to weld together the German States, inculcating the ideal of a citizenship that should disregard every one outside its own borders. In their schools German children have been thoroughly taught to love their country, which would in itself be a splendid thing; but they have also been systematically taught to hate and despise, or to hate and envy other countries, which is a vile

and senseless thing. The fruits of this are seen in the cold-blooded murders and dreadful outrages which their soldiers and sailors have inflicted on defenceless men, women and children, whose countries stood in the way of German ambitions and designs; while the wicked exploits of these men have been acclaimed throughout the Fatherland with "a just pride,"[1] as deeds of heroism.

In direct contrast with this is the teaching of the Bible. Speaking to the Jews of old, who were an intensely patriotic nation, God said, "Love ye the stranger." How different that is from the selfish patriotism of the German "Superman!"

Whenever a nation or a man discards the Christian Revelation, with the pure love of its holy and Catholic Creed, for some ideal of human pride and ambition, there is always a danger of every virtue becoming a vice; of that which is noble becoming base; of progress upwards towards Heaven becoming a reversion downwards towards Hell. Selfishness is a cruel thing, either in a great people or in an individual. Divine grace is the only power that can save nations and men from its merciless purpose and crooked policy. It can sanctify patriotism and it can make the most loyal citizenship stretch out to other countries the hands of a generous brotherhood in Jesus Christ, the One Lord of true hearts everywhere.

119. Peace—at any Price.—"For a nation, as for an individual, the most contemptible of

[1] The *Cologne Gazette.*

all sins is the sin of cowardice; and while there are other sins as base, there is none baser. . . . Righteousness must be put before peace; and peace must be recognized as of value only when it is the handmaiden of justice. The doctrine of national or individual neutrality between right and wrong is an ignoble doctrine, unworthy of the support of any brave or honourable man. It is wicked to be neutral between right and wrong. An ignoble peace may be the worst crime against humanity, and a righteous war may represent the greatest service a nation can, at a given moment, render to itself and to mankind."—THEODORE ROOSEVELT, *in a letter to a friend.*

120. Peace—when it comes.—"With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right—let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up this nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphan; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace."—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

121. Personal Responsibility.—In one of his illuminating articles on "The War Day by Day" the Military Correspondent of *The Times* wrote: "It is reported that at the Council when the Kaiser signed the declaration of war against Russia, he threw down his pen upon the table after signing, and said, 'Gentlemen, you have compelled me to sign, but you will live to rue it.'"[1]

[1] *The Times*, December 16, 1914.

If that is a true report of what took place, it suggests an interesting study in psychology. It means that a man who is credited with being exceptionally strong-willed and masterful yielded to the pressure of those whom he should have guided, instead of being led or coerced by them.[1]

In any case, the story points a moral of deep importance for us all to remember. War could not have been declared by Germany against Russia, without the Emperor's signature being affixed to the declaration. No reasoning or persuasion on the part of his advisers could have prevailed, had he remained firm in the interests of peace. He accepted the responsibility, and signed the declaration. No casuistry on the part of German apologists can obliterate this plain fact of history; it is quite clear to the minds of all intelligent people. Therefore, we say, the guilt lies at his door, even if in an hour of weakness his inclinations or judgment were overborne by the War-party around him.

Each one of us holds, within the limits of our personal activities, the power of deciding, from time to time, whether we will yield to some temptation and do a wrong act involving suffering and sorrow for others, or whether we will take a decisive stand for what is right. Let no man say, "I was

[1] On June 29, 1915, the Wireless Press at Berlin received and published the following German news: "A private letter from the Western front reports that the Emperor, while visiting the region of the recent fiercely-contested battles, knelt down at the graves of many brave German boys and prayed fervently. Rising, he said to his followers, 'I did not want it.'"

taken off my guard, being over-persuaded by stronger wills than my own." St. Paul says, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." That inspired statement assures us that, among the many blessings we enjoy through union with the Risen Saviour, is the gift of an enlightened conscience. If you are a Christian, humbly seeking for strength from Christ, He will make your will strong for good. And if you keep in constant close communion with Him, you will not easily be taken off your guard. That is one of the privileges of the man who is "in Christ." It secures him against many a fierce assault, and leads him safely past many a dangerous pitfall, where men, stronger by nature than he, are overcome in the pride of their own hearts.

122. Pleasure v. Patriotism.—Describing a visit he had recently paid to the trenches in France and Flanders, Lord Curzon said that when he came back to this country he found life in the streets of London going on as usual. "The papers reported sports and games, and only on Saturday, while our men were going through indescribable agonies on the battle-field in Flanders, there were at Manchester 30,000 looking on at twenty-two other men kicking a leather ball about."

There is no harm in football itself; it is a fine manly game, and would be healthy for mind as well as body if purged of the betting curse. But in time of war public sports and festivals seem strangely out of place. War is a great revealer of the weaknesses as well as the strength of a nation. And this

war has proved how deep are the roots that pleasure has taken among us. Its fruits are coveted with selfish greediness; and as the taste for pleasure grows, so does the spirit of true manliness, of patriotism and of religion decline.

123. Praise for Answered Prayer.—Among those who were saved when the *Lusitania* was sunk by a German submarine was a clergyman,[1] who wrote a graphic account of his experiences. When he went under water as the ship sank, he prayed much and felt confident he was going to be saved. He was afterwards among those who got on to an upturned boat. He said, "After a time we sang 'Praise God from Whom all blessings flow,' and we put a good deal of heart into it. It was started by a young fifth engineer."

When we have received some special blessing, whether in clear direct answer to prayer or out of the unsought care of our loving Father in Heaven, let us never forget to thank Him. He looks for it; but, alas! He often looks in vain. "Were there not ten cleansed; but where are the nine?"[2]

124. Prayer answered.—"I had news from the Dardanelles last week but one. A sailor on one of our transport ships told me in the simplest language—just narrating the fact of the moment—how airships of the enemy came over the troop-ship dropping bombs. The captain, who is a man of

[1] Rev. Henry Wood Simpson, Rector of Rossland, B.C.
[2] St. Luke xvii, 17.

God, gave the order to the men to pray; and they did pray. They knelt on the deck and prayed, and the Lord delivered them. The eig teen bombs, which seemed to be falling from over head, fell harmlessly into the sea."—R. F. HORTON, D.D. *in a sermon at Manchester, on Sunday, Jnue* 13, 1915.

125. Prayer—before the Battle.—The Paris correspondent of the *Evening News*[1] wrote home: "The Irish Guards were, one day last week, the heroes of an incident which has been the subject of enthusiastic comment from one end to the other of the British lines. The famous regiment was ordered to take an exposed German position; and, before advancing, they knelt for a moment in silent prayer. Then, springing to their feet, they fixed bayonets and dashed, in wide open order, across the exposed plateau swept by the enemies' machine-guns. What remained of the regiment—for many fell—took the German position at the point of the bayonet. Eye-witnesses state that our men crossed the plain hurrahing and singing, while many of them had a look of absolute happiness on their faces."

Someone there must have been—perhaps a commanding officer with an influence over the men—to speak the word or set the example which moved them to their knees. Although such an incident as this may not have been repeated, yet we are sure of one thing—that thousands of our soldiers entered the battle-lines in silent secret prayer Those who know them best have said that the

[1] September 23, 1914.

nearer many of them approached the front, so much the nearer did their souls draw near to God in prayer. And this, not so much because they were afraid, but rather because in that hour they felt themselves right up against the great realities of death and eternity, and they sought to find acceptance with the Saviour Whom in such a crisis they needed more than all else.

126. Prayers of Intercession.—The death of Colonel Guy du Maurier, author of *An Englishman's Home*, was described in a letter written from France by Lance-Corporal Fovargue to his wife (dated March 18, 1915). He says: "I was with Lieutenant-Colonel du Maurier at his headquarters when we got shelled out. We were having a sleep at the time when the first shell came, and it took off part of the roof. At the same time the telephone-bell rang, and I stayed to take the message, while the Colonel and the others rushed to the doorway. Just as they got there, another shell burst right in the doorway, and the Colonel was killed instantly, and the others wounded, except one man who had the presence of mind to throw himself flat down just as the shell came. If I had not stayed behind to take down the message, I should probably have shared the fate of Colonel du Maurier. I was really lucky in getting away; but it has been like that through the war; *and I firmly believe it is all the prayers at home that are being answered.*"[1]

This last sentence means a great deal. It serves

[1] *Daily Mail*, March 25, 1915.

to keep in memory the great value attached by so many of our brave soldiers to the prayers offered for them in the Homeland. Lance-Corporal Fovargue evidently believed that God heard and was answering the prayers made on his behalf; his faith co-operated with the intercessions that ascended to the throne of grace for him. And, in addition, he was a man who had a strong sense of duty. There was for him the temptation to rush with the others to the door and see what was happening. But, at that moment the telephone-bell rang, and his duty was to remain behind and take down the message; which he did. His devotion to duty as well as his faith helped to obtain the answer to the prayers of those who loved and thought of him. "But," someone will say, "many brave men were killed during the war, who did their duty and had faith in God; and we who loved them dearly prayed constantly for their safe return —but alas! to no purpose. How do you explain that? Why should the prayers of others have been answered, whilst we prayed in vain?"

I can only meet this question by saying that it is one of the mysteries of time which will be cleared up in the light of eternity. The continuity of life after death is an assured fact to the believing soul. The God of love does not answer all our prayers now. This is not because He loves us less than others who receive an immediate answer. Nor is it always because our prayers are wanting in the faith by which theirs are marked. In His wisdom the Lord, Who alone knows all of us as we are,

sees, maybe, that we need the discipline of trial and suffering. He allows the shadow of bereavement to darken our path below, in order to make us look up and think more of the life beyond where our dear ones are waiting for us, and also because He has a place and a work there for which they are needed. "God never makes a mistake," nor will one of His promises fail eventually.

127. Prayer—International.—On March 10, 1915, the Inauguaration Meeting of a new Society was held in the Speaker's House, Westminster. It is called the "Russia Society." Its members are British people. Its object is to bring into closer friendship and a clearer understanding the peoples of the world's two greatest Empires. A message was sent from this meeting to our King, and also one to the Tsar of Russia. In the latter occur these words: "It is felt by all people here, and especially by this Society, that Russia is greater now than she has ever been in the past. We are profoundly thankful for Russia's friendship in our great national struggle. We recognize not only her material help, but *the influence of the prayers*[1] of Holy Russia." This last sentence contains the germ of a glorious truth, whose value is (if possible) enhanced by the fact that the message was sent by a society which would not be scheduled as "religious." Just a gathering of educated thoughtful English people, claiming to represent the British Empire! For one nation to tell another that it

[1] The italics are mine.

"recognizes not only their material help, but the influence of their prayers" is one of the most encouraging signs of the times we live in. We are familiar with the phrase "reciprocal relations" between two or more countries, implying reciprocity of trade interests or sentiments. But, the reciprocity of prayer between nations—What a grand thing it would be if that were to become general! England probably owes far more than we shall ever know in this world to the influence of "the prayers of Holy Russia." The people there are deeply religious; the ignorance of the peasantry may be wide-spread; a large amount of superstition may cloud the doctrines of the eternal truths they confess; but their faith is sincere, and therefore their prayers prevail. Let England not fail to give Russia her prayers too.

128. Prayer—Unhallowed.—To the minds of many good people one of the most bewildering problems connected with the War has been the frequent assurances of the German Emperor that, because of his prayers and faith in God, he is under the special care of the Almighty and victory must crown the arms of the Fatherland! It is probable that simple-minded folk among us think, more than they like to say, that he must be a sincere Christian or he could not make such professions. And doubtless millions of his own subjects revere him as a very saintly personage living in close communion with the Lord, and they are building great hopes and expectations on these prayers of his.

What are we to think and say about this? It has suggested to my mind a certain parallel of a very shocking character. In the early months of the year 1913, a sensational trial was held in India, known as the "Agra Murder" trial. A Lieutenant Clark conspired with a Mrs. Fulham to murder the wife of the former and the husband of the latter. Both schemes succeeded. Mrs. Clark was shot by paid assassins, and Mr. Fulham was poisoned. The special feature in the case, elicited by the correspondence discovered and made public, was *the religious phraseology employed.* Mrs. Fulham wrote: "If it is God's will, He will make all our efforts come to a successful issue." When the poison supplied to her by Clark seemed too slow in taking effect, she wrote: "I have had a great disappointment; but it is evidently God's will to spare Hubby's life; he is not going to die." When the poison did do its work and Mr. Fulham was beginning to succumb, Clark wrote: "At last our prayers are being answered."

The two criminals were convicted on trial; and both were sentenced to death. Clark pleaded "Guilty" after the trial, and was executed. Mrs. Fulham's sentence was commuted to imprisonment for life; she has since died in prison.

How nauseating is the religious cant in the letters of those two demon-possessed people! When we read their blasphemous effusions, we are shocked at the moral depravity of human hearts which could so dare to use the name of the Just and Holy Lord; but we are not therefore in any doubt about the reality of the prayers uttered by clean lips.

The German Emperor has always been a psychological enigma. Inordinate egoism is undoubtedly the key to much of his character, and probably renders him liable to some delusions. But that is a mark of pride or vanity which is in itself offensive to God. The mere assumption that God is on his side is not faith; it sounds more like arrogance.

God says in His Holy Word: "The prayer of the UPRIGHT is His delight";[1] but in the same verse He also says, "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord." And again, "Hear the word of the Lord. . . . When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood."[2]

129. Presumption is not Faith.—The German Emperor has laid claim, more than any other public personage of modern times, to have God on his side in all he does. Some of his utterances seem to breathe the spirit of a strong personal trust; and we have then wished that other great men would honour the Lord by a more outspoken avowal of their confidence in Him.

But for the most part the Kaiser proclaims his faith in God as though it were a kind of alliance between the creature and the Creator. He is Moses II without the humility of Israel's law-giver. It is his firm belief that God is on his side in such a way that his sayings are inspired, his acts infallible, and his power irresistible. The habit of speaking

[1] Proverbs xv. 8. [2] Isaiah i. 15.

in a too familiar way about the Holy One has led him to refer to God as "My old Ally." When a man brings himself thus to believe in the certainty of a Divine Alliance, no doubt it gives him a kind of strength, which is sometimes mistaken for spirituality.

On the other hand it exposes him to great risks, and is fraught with terrible dangers to those who follow him as their guide and leader.

The same kind of awful claims are sometimes advanced by persons in obscure life, arising probably from the same root—vanity. They deceive themselves by thinking that God is on their side in such a way as to be opposed to all who differ from them. They can only see a very little of the grandeur of revealed truth; but on their limited horizon that little looms very large, allowing no place for the convictions and experiences of men far greater and better than themselves. Presumption is not faith in God. It is often a very ugly and forbidding form of arrogance which demands of God His help and protection, whereas the true believer would only pray in deep humility, "Thy will, not mine be done."

130. Pride in a Good Cause.—"The Germans have made us a prouder, if a sadder people than we were."[1] So it was truly said, when the war had reached the tenth month of its blood-stained track. "Sadder," because of our accumulated weight of suffering and sorrow. "Prouder," because we had

[1] Leading article in the *Daily Telegraph*, May 11, 1915.

increasingly realized the grandeur of the cause on whose behalf we were making such terrible sacrifices. We had drawn the sword at the beginning in defence of honour and our pledged word as well as in self-defence. But only as we learned, by a horrified experience, the character of our enemy and the fiendish outcome of his long preparations for wholesale slaughter on sea and land—only then did we learn what the issue would be, if we failed. Then we knew ourselves to be the "defenders of the faith," the guardians of the principles of love, justice, mercy and goodwill amongst men, as opposed to the armed hosts of that "Kultur" which would plunge the world into a "bottomless pit of hideous moral disease."

It is a grand thing for a nation to grow proud of such convictions and of such a destiny, especially if her people are strong enough and great enough to carry through their purpose to a victorious conclusion.

The Church of Christ on earth is the guardian of a Divine Revelation to man. And that revelation is the casket and sanctuary of all we know about truth and holiness, goodness and purity, love and gentleness, as opposed to the forces of evil in the world. The Church may well confront wickedness in high places or low with a sense of conscious pride.

This may also be said of every Christian man. The time was perhaps when you halted between two opinions. You had to choose between some right course and the temptation to do a wrong act. You chose the former in the name of Christ;

and in His strength you have held on your course. You may have been made sadder, for a time at least, by the pain of what you incurred when you conquered the temptation. But as your experience has proved increasingly the contrast between holiness and sin, your eyes have been opened and your vision enlarged, so that you can say, "I am thankful to be a Christian—proud of being engaged in a cause so righteous; as I know it is the only power that can save the world from the hideous moral disease and selfish cruelty of a Godless system and a Christless creed."

131. Prisoners of War.—A correspondent of *The Times*, after much trouble, succeeded in obtaining permission to visit the prisoners' camp in the small town of Friedrichsfeld, south of Wesel, where 2,500 prisoners of war, mostly English, were interned. He found them very much disheartened by the news they had heard about their country. "They had been told by the German guards that there was a revolution in England, more especially in London, that the Bank of England had been destroyed by Zeppelin bombs, that civil war had broken out in Ireland, and many other tales." When they were told the real truth, their joy was beyond expression. "Many of them pressed my hands in such a way that I found it safer to hide them in my pockets!"[1]

All true Christians are soldiers of the Cross. It is the unhappy experience of some, at times, to pass through the cloud of doubt or unbelief. They

[1] *The Times*, November 10, 1914.

are prisoners of war, held captive by Satan. His agents—the lesser spirits of evil—are ever mounting guard over their souls, tormenting them with base and cruel slanders. It may be that, even now, some of you are suffering the miseries of this spiritual bondage. The tempter comes to you, suggesting dark doubts about those truths you long to believe. He tells you that the Bible is not a Divine Revelation, but a collection of myths and legends; that Jesus did not die for your sins; that He never rose from the dead; that Heaven is only a dream of deluded men and women. Be not deceived by these miserable suggestions. Jesus still lives. The story of His Cross and Resurrection is a glorious reality. He is winning victories over sin in every land. Those English prisoners could not escape from their captors; they could only believe in the good news, and rejoice in hearing it. If you believe, you may at once be free, and through your prison doors you may come forth, once more to join the ranks of our King.

132. A Promise.—A dying sapper, who had been signalman on a branch line in Cheshire, talked to one who was trying to comfort him—about his home, and the good loving wife who would wait there in vain for him. "I've always had a good home, Sir; and will you please read Bess's letter again? Tell her I can't reply, but she'll hear from me up there by wireless."

That poor fellow evidently believed that from the other world he would be able in spirit to com-

municate with his wife, and perhaps that she would be conscious sometimes of his presence. Where such a hope exists, it would be needlessly harsh to condemn it as wrong because of the known evils and vagaries of professional spiritualism. But, after all, such hopes are very vague and uncertain. Far better is it if people would only be satisfied to believe that there is One Who, before He left this world, was able to say "I am with you always." To Him we can always send the wireless message of prayer. And He is able to send back by His Spirit the answer which is full of assurance, comfort and strength.

133. Providence in Little Things.—An A.B. on board a battleship wrote a letter to a country clergyman in Lincolnshire, in which he said: "I will just give you an incident that occurred with us in the North Sea. We have always a lot of sea-gulls following us about; and after meals they 'pipe-down,' *i.e.* go to sleep. I was at a 12-pounder gun after dinner, all our poultry having forty winks as usual, when I was startled to see them all circling round an object which proved to be the periscope of a German submarine; and I can assure you, if it had not been for the sea-gulls, we should have been in Davy Jones's locker."

A watch, no doubt, was kept on the battleship, and the look-out men were all at their posts; but the sea-gulls were quicker than they to detect the hidden danger lurking so near, and by their timely warning they secured the safety of the ship and all on board.

"What a lucky chance it was for them, those sea-gulls being there!" That is the natural exclamation most people would make. Probably on the battleship there were some at least who said more in secret to Him Who cares for and watches over His children. Do such things ever happen by mere chance? Certainly not in the life of anyone who believes in Divine Providence. We need not suppose that those sea-gulls were there simply and solely for the object of warning an English battleship; but their presence and conduct were made to serve that purpose. When Peter heard the cock crow, he "remembered the word of Jesus." The cock was not made to crow just then in order to recall the disciple to a consciousness of his guilt; but the Son of God foreknew all, and turned to account the ordinary action of the bird; and this must deeply have impressed Peter at the time and for ever.

If we ask the Lord in faith to overrule the circumstances of life for us, He will do so. Nothing is too small or trivial for Him to use in accomplishing great purposes for those who believe that He is Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent.

134. A Purpose achieved.—When the British Expeditionary Force first went out to France, Bishop Taylor Smith, the Chaplain-General, wrote a short prayer, suitable for the soldiers, and had it printed on a card and given to the men as they left the Homeland.[1]

[1] On one side of this card was the Lord's Prayer, and

Some months afterwards, one of these prayer-cards was sent back to him. It had been at Mons, the Aisne and Ypres. A message was attached to it, bearing these words: "It did all it was meant to do for me."

What was it meant to do? It was intended for the spiritual guidance of the soldier, to help him whenever he thought of God and of his soul and of the dangers to which he would be exposed, or the death he might have to endure. And the message on the card had achieved the purpose of its writer.

Every ordained servant of Christ should have a like purpose in the work of the Ministry to which he has given his life. In the preparation and preaching of our sermons, as well as in our private dealings with men personally, let there always be a definite purpose; and let that purpose be clearly pronounced. To lead sinners to the Saviour's Cross, to show men how His precious Blood cleanseth from all sin, to assure them of the reality of His Resurrection, to encourage them to believe in the providential care and love of the Heavenly Father, and to pray in faith for the gift of the Holy Spirit—these are the glorious tidings which should be repeated again and again, in their rich variety of light and colour, whenever we stand up to preach in Christ's name. And, if we do this faithfully

on the other "A Soldier's Prayer: Almighty and most merciful Father, Forgive me my sins: Grant me Thy peace: Give me Thy power: Bless me in life and death, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

and lovingly, our purpose shall be achieved. Either in this life or in the future, we shall receive the message, by pen or from the lips of those whom we tried to help. "Your sermon (or your teaching and influence) did all it was meant to do for me." "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." (Eccles. xi. 1).

135. Quiet Christians.—A Corporal in the Poplar and Stepney Rifles wrote home: "I take good care of myself. I never risk my life in doing what is not necessary; but if it is necessary that risks should be undertaken, I say a little prayer that I may see you all again, and then get about it, as the men in my section look to me not to get excited."

What a lot of good things are crowded into these few words! They give us a brief character sketch of a man of the right type. There was common-sense, prudence, a sense of duty to those under him, loving thoughts of home, and the silent prayer of faith! There are thousands of these quiet men in the world around us. They are not demonstrative religionists; but they are true Christians, whose faithful lives and consistent characters will one day be seen to shine with the glow of a beauty that will never fade away.

136. Realize—Then Serve.—From the Dardanelles, where he was acting as chaplain to a Division of the Expeditionary Force, the Rev. Henry A.

Hall sent home a thrilling account of the landing on the Gallipoli Peninsula, which appeared in the *Church Family Newspaper*, of July 2, 1915. After describing the glorious achievement of our splendid soldiers, he went on to say: "Of the deeper and more pastoral side of my work here I feel I cannot speak at present. It is all too sacred, too sad. But let me say this: believe or not, as you like, letters published in public papers, you may take it from me as a fact that the clergy *at home* have the best chances with men, most time, most opportunity. And what is needed beyond all else is that the home clergy should look after the men—teach them, help them, be straight with them, be true to them, bring them to God. And, please God, if I live to come home, I shall come home feeling I must do a thousand-fold more than I can have done in the past to try and win men to Christ—and, having won, to keep them true. The pastoral and teaching work is done at home."

Those are heart-searching words for us all who are working in the home ministry, although Mr. Hall, as a true and humble man, applies them to himself more than to others. For us all the lesson is obvious. Even if we have not been privileged to go out and work among our soldiers in the field, yet through this war we have had our eyes opened to see some things much more vividly than we ever saw them in the prosaic times of peace. Each one of us, more or less clearly, has had his vision of the great realities of time and eternity. We must indeed have a dull sense of spiritual truth,

not to have learned, more than we knew before, man's need of a Saviour, and the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ to meet that need. And, as we have realized this, so should we strive to make others see and know and believe the things best worth having and holding. That should be one outcome of the Great War.

137. Recognition of Service.—Probably nothing has so encouraged our soldiers as the appreciation shown by their Commander-in-Chief. Whenever possible, he has personally inspected them, after they have been relieved from the trenches and have come for a short while to the base-camps. Slowly Sir John French passes along the ranks, making short speeches to the men, explaining briefly the true significance of recent operations. For many weeks, perhaps, these men have been under incessant shell-fire; the sacrifices made and the sufferings endured have seemed to them to have achieved so very little in the way of really good results. But now they learn from the lips of the Commander-in-Chief himself that their courage and devotion have been of inestimable service, and that without their co-operation his general plans could not have been brought to a successful issue. He tells them this, and warmly thanks them all. Then the losses and hardships are seen in a new light, and each man knows he has not endured and fought in vain. When his turn comes to return to the trenches, he will go back with a new inspiration for duty and danger.

When this life's warfare is over, we may feel quite sure that the Great Captain of our Salvation will tell the soldiers of His Cross a great deal which is now obscure about the present campaign. The sacrifices which seemed so useless, the struggles that we made without any apparent good resulting, the disheartening attempts which only looked like dismal failures will then be all explained to us by the Lord Himself. From His lips we shall learn that no faithful service, no act of self-denial, no loving surrender of our will for the sake of helping others, has been fruitless. He will then explain the purpose of things that seem now to happen without any reason; and He will show how rich in results they really are. And for us there will be the added joy of knowing that all these things belong to the past; we shall never have to go through them again.

138. Recruiting for the King.—Speaking in the House of Lords, on one occasion Lord Kitchener said: "It is worthy of remark that there is no better recruiting agent than the soldier himself; and in many cases, a large portion of a man's leave has been spent by him in encouraging the youths in his home district to enter the service of their country."

That is what the true soldier and patriot does. He has been to the Front himself, and he knows how great is the need of more men to hold the thin line out there against the foe; and he is confident of the justice of his country's cause, and in his heart

beats high the aspiration for the true glory of conquering the proud strong enemy. Therefore, with words brave and confident he urges on all the duty and the privilege of facing the danger and sharing in the victory.

That is not always the case however. Too many of those who return home—wounded it may be or else invalided—only tell of the dangers of the campaign and talk of the hardships of the trenches. These men discourage others and hinder the cause they ought to champion.

In the thirteenth chapter of the Book of Numbers, twelve names are recorded. They were the men whom Moses sent to spy out the promised land. Ten of them brought back an evil report, such as to discourage the people and terrify them. But two brave strong men, Joshua and Caleb, "stilled the people," saying "Let us at once go up and possess the land; for we are well able to overcome it." And they were right, as the sequel proved. Their confidence was in the Lord: and they were true recruiting-soldiers of His army. Of what sort are we, who have had to face the foe of unbelief, and to do battle with temptations? Are we hindering others, by magnifying the difficulties of faith? Or do we help them by telling how the "Captain of our Salvation" always gives His faithful soldiers victory, and finally peace and rest?

139. Religion and Arms.—(1) In the New Year of 1915, Admiral Jellicoe wrote to his brother: "We spent our Christmas Day waiting for the Ger-

mans who did not appear. But we managed to find time for Church and for three Celebrations of Holy Communion, although the whole time we were cleared for action, and the men were at the guns."

(2) An Army Chaplain, in a letter dated September 28, 1914, wrote: "Yesterday (as we are billeted in a village) I administered the Holy Communion at 8.30 a.m. in the garden of a château owned by a French baron, as we could not have the use of the Roman Catholic Church. The baron provided the wine and the table, and twenty-five officers, and two non-commissioned officers attended, besides men. Then there was a parade-service of about 2,000, lasting twenty-five minutes, while guns were booming not far off; then another of about a thousand: then a thirty-minute evening service in the baron's garden (about 100 present), followed by the Holy Communion in the dark with two candles. There were twenty-one officers and twenty-eight N.C.O's and men present at the Holy Communion."

(3) On the battle-field in France on the same day an officer wrote home: "A padre turned up yesterday, and at night (it was not safe to begin earlier) we held a service at which a great number of our men attended, and also afterwards there was a large attendance at Holy Communion—a strange sight! It was in a wood, in black darkness save for two candles on a packing-case which served as an altar; the chalice a tin mug; the soldiers, grimed with battle, each with his rifle, knelt in a

circle round the light. There must have been such scenes in very early Christian days."

How those men must have valued the means of grace! even though their accompaniments were so plain and meagre—gems of comfort none the less precious although not set in wrought gold! Who can tell the joy and peace realized then by many—some of whom perhaps were soon to fall in battle? Ought we not to appreciate more highly the same privileges which we can always enjoy undisturbed in our days of peace?

140. Religion and Moral.—The Military Correspondent of *The Times*, in one of his most interesting articles on the Balkan War, when it was drawing to a close, explained the disastrous defeat of the Turkish army by the gradual loss of *moral* they had sustained by the decay of religion amongst them under the régime of the young Turks. Prayers had been largely given up by the troops, who no longer had the ministrations of their spiritual leaders, and *moral* had gone in consequence. Then had come disaster. He contrasted with all this the tremendous fervour of the Balkan League, and described a picture he had recently seen in a French illustrated paper. "Two French officers were shown looking at a Bulgarian regiment on their knees, their priest praying for them and blessing them before they went into action. 'What would one of our generals get,' said one of the French officers to his friend, 'if he ordered such a thing as that?'

'He would get the victory,' quietly said the other."[1]

If the presence or the absence of religious faith and fervour made so great a difference in the *moral* of the soldiers fighting under the Crescent of the False Prophet, what may we not believe and hope if throughout the armies of the Allied Nations there were more of the spirit of faith in the Living God? more public acknowledgment of His power? more prayer to Him in the name of the true and only Saviour Jesus Christ? We who remain at home, from whose thoughts our brothers in the fighting-line are never long absent—we might do much for them and for our country, if we prayed more frequently, more earnestly, more believingly for them, that their *moral* might be strengthened by the presence and sustaining grace of the Lord, known to them and realized by them as in their midst and by their side. And the answer would come back in the good news of great victories won.

We may carry on this thought to the time when the nations of the world are at peace once more. Unless, meanwhile, this present age has been brought to an end by the Second Advent of our Lord, there will remain, as before, the long drawn-out conflict between good and evil. There will be just as much need then for fervent prayer and strong faith on the part of all true soldiers of the Cross. Among the many tales remembered and recounted of deeds of heroism in our righteous Cause, let there be a

[1] *Russian Life To-day*, by Bishop Bury (Mowbray), page 115.

place always found for the stories—as true as they are wonderful—of the way in which God has answered prayer and honoured those who put their trust in Him.

141. Religion—its Power over Men.—A Siberian regiment, which had covered itself with glory by a signal victory over the Germans, was ordered straight from the battle-field into a hollow in the Polish plain, to receive as a regiment the St. George's Cross, in recognition of the exploit. The ceremony was preceded by an impressive religious service conducted by a Russian priest. It is thus described by an eye-witness :—

"Arrayed in his gorgeous vestments, the priest stood bare-headed in the cold dusk of the grey October day; and with golden hair falling to his shoulders and eyes uplifted, he stood before the Bible which rested on piled bayonets, and so went through the rites of his Church. . . . At the close of the service, all these men of blood and action knelt while the priest held aloft the Crucifix and pronounced in his deep melodious voice the Benediction. As he did so, the ranks sank as one man; and kneeling with their bayonets silhouetted against the sky-line, they received the blessing. On the face of each, as again and again he crossed himself, was the look of piety and exaltation that spells a deep-seated faith—a religious fervour that is the fundamental characteristic of the man."

Therein lies the strength of the Russian army more than aught else. It was the same power

which nerved to steel the courage of the finer souls among the old Crusaders ; and again, in later times, it made the Ironsides of Cromwell invincible. After all, Religion is the great power for exalting men into heroes. The faith may be defective, but if only it be sincere and deeply felt, it is " the victory that overcometh the world."

This faith is needed in peace as well as in war. If it rests whole-heartedly on Jesus Christ, it has a sure foundation which will give it permanent stability. If the whole of our nation came under the mighty power of the Cross, then we should become a great army of consecrated soldiers, fired with the enthusiasm of righting wrong, of uplifting fallen humanity in every other land, of making the kingdoms of this world become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ."

142. Religion—needed in Trouble.—A chaplain wrote home, saying : " The Front is unspeakable. I have known men die of shots, I have known men go mad, I have known them come into the hospital with shattered nerves. Do tell the Territorials and soldiers at home that they must know God before they come out, if they would adequately face what lies before them. They will need all the religion they have got, or can have. . . . There are no atheists at the Front, and men are not ashamed to say that, though they have not prayed before, they are praying now."

We shall all have, at some time, to face trouble, sickness, death. If those who have passed through

"the dark valley of the shadow" could speak to us from the other side, they would all surely say, "Let no man delay to get right with God. Do not wait until the darkness of night falls on your life, but seek His face now, in the light of Calvary's Cross. Make sure that your hearts are cleansed in the Atoning Blood and your peace sealed by the Spirit of Love, while the day of opportunity is yours."

143. Religion and Righteousness.—It has been said that with Russia this is a Religious War; whereas with us it is a Righteous War. It was upon a question between Right and Wrong that we entered the conflict; and ever since we have made this principle our rallying-cry, and have justified ourselves by it before neutral nations. "Russians have a passion for God";[1] and that has inspired them more than anything else in the great sacrifices they have made for the integrity and defence of their Empire. An instance of this occurs in the account given by a Russian officer of the battle of the Vistula (October, 1914), in which he said: "My company was the first to cross the river, which seemed to boil from the bursting of the shells. Afterwards nine companies rushed the enemy's position. A priest, with long streaming hair, and holding high a Cross amid a hail of bullets, stood blessing the soldiers as they ran past."

These two—Religion and Righteousness—ought always to go together; they should be comple-

[1] Bishop Bury.

mentary, the one to the other. And yet there is sometimes a sort of estrangement between them. This may be seen both in Russia and England. The Russian peasant is often religious with an intense fervour; and yet he is not always righteous; his conduct does not correspond to his faith; his character is lacking in the moral qualities of honesty and truthfulness.

On the other hand, the Englishman is frequently a man of honour; and yet he does not recognize God in his daily life. He is righteous but not religious. The probable explanation of these two states of mind is that the Russian is only coming into the light of truth; he sees its beauty, but has not yet realized all its requirements; whereas the Englishman inherits from pious forefathers the traditional and hereditary instincts of the faith he has given up.

May England and Russia mutually help, each the other, to a clearer understanding about the vital relationship of these two things—the "Righteousness which exalteth a nation," and the Religious Faith which makes a people strong and confident, brave and noble, just and holy.

144. Religion—its shattered Ideals.—Ramscapelle is one of those unfortunate villages in Belgium which was shelled by the Germans. The church was partially destroyed, a statue of our Lord being shattered to pieces.

I have been looking at a photograph of this. The broken parts of the statue are put together

so that it is placed in a recumbent position. A priest and some devout women are standing around, gazing with saddened eyes on the ruined Form before them. One could not look on the picture without feeling for them. It meant so much to them: it was such a tragedy in their religious life. But quickly came another thought. That was only an image, in stone or marble, cold and lifeless when perfect, of the real Living Christ. It might be shattered into a thousand fragments, never to be again restored; but that could not affect Him at all. And those poor souls who wept over their broken image of the Saviour could still lift up their hearts in prayer to Him, and feel Him near to them in their distress. Indeed if they could see things in their true light, it might be far better to have lost their visible eikon of the Christ (a mere creation of the sculptor's art), and so learn to look directly to Him Who is invisible to the eyes of sense.

And then there came to me another thought. How many of us have allowed our own fancy or the imagination of others (preachers or poets) to form before our minds some image or representation of the Saviour! It was but a human conception after all; yet we loved it and trusted ourselves to it, thinking all the while that we were worshipping Him. And then came the crisis in our life. Some heavy blow was struck at our convictions, and the image we had formed was shattered; and for a while all religion seemed unreal, and faith and hope died within us. That has been the experience of many. If it is yours, be not

discouraged thereby. "Cast not away therefore your confidence."[1] Jesus still lives and reigns. Not, maybe, the Christ of your past mistaken surmisings; but the Incarnate, Crucified, and Risen Saviour of the Gospels. Even if you cannot yet see Him very clearly, believe in Him, and He will soon unveil Himself as He is in reality, to your rejoicing heart.

145. Religious Spirit among Soldiers.—Canon Scott Holland recorded in the *Commonwealth* his impressions of a short visit to France, and spoke of the pride with which he had seen our English soldiers walking about the streets of Havre, their good conduct while exposed to the temptations of the city, their invariable good-temper and cheerfulness while occupied only by the weary business of fatigue duties at a base-camp, many of them strained by the recent agony of the firing-line. He goes on to say: "And how do they get along? By the blessed gift of infinite good-humour, and by singing hymns. Never were such hymn-singers known. They never tire of hymns. No sing-song that does not culminate in hymns. You ought to hear the shout of their jolly voices. They all have their favourites. And, though we do a good deal in the way of 'Throw out the life-line,' or 'At the Roll-call I'll be there,' or 'Hold the Fort'; still, far the most popular are the best. Put it to the vote, and the strength of the shout will be

[1] Hebrews x. 35.

for 'Holy, Holy, Holy,' or 'Abide with Me,' or 'Jesu, Lover of my Soul,' and very often for 'Lead, Kindly Light.' They sing and sing for ever; and if you give them a bit of religion, they have their grip on it at once. They listen as they do not know how to listen at home. There is no beating about the bush, and no apology needed. They want you to talk religion right away. There is no wall up between you and them. You need have no fear at all. Whatever you can give they are hungry to take."

This testimony of a popular London preacher just falls in with a mass of similar evidence from many another witness. Would that every clergyman in England fully knew and understood it all! So that, when the war is over, and those men—all that are left of them—return, we may be prepared to give them all they need in the way of religion. We shall want to hear them tell us out of their personal experience all they are willing to say about battles and victories. And they will be wanting us to tell them out of our personal experience something at least of what we have learned about the way of fighting against sin and temptation and of winning the victory through the power and love of Jesus Christ. They will want something more than cold, heartless, formal services. This means that some of us must humbly ask for more grace, more wisdom, more fire of love, more sympathy with souls seeking the truth; and those of us who are shy or reserved about getting at these returned heroes in private conversation,

must at least try to give them what they want in our sermons.

146. Renaissance of the Soul.—When the German Emperor signed the declaration of war against Russia, counting on his well-prepared agents simultaneously to gain the sympathy of the world by raising the old cry of the "Slav Peril," he doubtless thought he was stopping for many a long year the hands of the clock of Russia's progress. Instead of which, a new era has already dawned for Russia, and she stands ready, when peace is declared, to take her place among the progressive nations of the world.

The great enemy of souls, despite his experience in craft and cunning, often miscalculates the powers he will evoke, when he hurls against some wayward backward child of God the thunderbolt of a strong temptation or a great sorrow. In the early wrestlings of the conflict, leaning on Jesus Christ for strength, instead of falling to earth the soul rises Heavenwards, stepping out of the crisis of her fate into a new path, freshly-made and clear—the pathway of a better life, a life of progress onwards and upwards.

147. A Reproach wiped out.—In the early months of the war, an Anglo-Italian poetess addressed to King Albert the lines:

> "No deeper sorrow shall Italia know
> Whose sons for freedom's sake have fought and died,
> Than this—that in thine hour of darkest woe
> She was not by thy side."

If that reproach ever was deserved by Italy (and the difficulties of her position negative its justice), she certainly won for herself a new record when she broke loose from the trammels of German intrigue, and took her place beside the nations who had drawn the sword in defence of Right against Wrong. Her most patriotic statesmen[1] are said to have made the evacuation of Belgium and the integrity of Serbia a condition for maintaining her neutrality. The predatory Powers refused to comply with this condition. Therefore Italy ranged herself on the side of the weak and outraged peoples.

The world is always full of those who suffer wrong at the hands of the selfish, the strong, the cruel, the malicious. Tyranny, injustice, fraud, mockery of cherished ideals and sacred aspirations, advantage wrung from misplaced affection—these are some of the forms of injury inflicted upon countless numbers of those who have not the physical or the moral strength to defend themselves successfully against forces superior to their will or power. Let not those who can protect them incur any just reproach for standing on one side. The call may come to some one in the home, or in the school, or in the workshop, to shield from harm some weak brother or sister exposed to suffering, danger, or temptation. Or the demand may be on the time and thought, or the money and influence, whereby some sorrow can be alleviated, some burden lightened, some calamity averted. Let none who have

[1] Signor Salandra and Baron Sonnino.

the means of the power delay in coming to the help of the needy.

148. Reproaches endured.—Italy had never been a really willing partner in the old Triple Alliance. It was a yoke imposed upon her, and endured for thirty years in fear rather than love. It has indeed been called a "Captivity" rather than an Alliance.

When at length she felt free to escape from her bondage through the door of neutrality into the fresh air of liberty and ranged herself boldly on the side of the New Alliance, to fight with them against the tyranny of the Austro-German States, she was bitterly reproached by them, and fiercely abused as though she were guilty of treachery against her friends. In a manifesto issued to his people at the time, the Emperor Francis Joseph charges Italy with "a perfidy of which history knows not the like." "Traitor" and "Treason" were the terms freely levelled by German newspapers against the people which had broken the Teutonic chains by which for years they had been enslaved. If Italy did prove herself traitor, it was a traitor to treachery, and necessary in order to be true to herself and to civilization.

The same kind of treatment is often experienced in the individual life. For years, it may be, a man has been the associate of evil companions; not because he loved sin, but because he had not the moral strength to say "No" to his false friends, and to break off his connexion with them.

Or in the home where God is never recognized, where religion is tabooed and worldly amusements are the one object in life, there is some one with nobler desires and higher impulses seeking for God and finding Him in Christ. It is felt at length that a stand must be made, a step forwards and outwards taken, a confession of faith fearlessly proclaimed. This usually calls forth animosity, ridicule, even hatred. And there are bitter reproaches recklessly flung—charges of disloyalty to friendship or family traditions to be incurred—taunts and persecution hard to endure. It needs a good deal of moral courage to stand firm at such times. For the sensitive nature the trial is especially severe. But loyalty to the truth always brings peace in the end; which is far better than an ignoble surrender to what is known to be wrong

149. Reserve in Religion.—"When I was talking last year with a British officer in a specially responsible position, and religion came to be mentioned, he said very shyly and with hesitation, 'Well, I have my bit; but I don't talk much about it, though it's everything to me, and I could not live without it.'"[1]

He Who alone can see beneath the surface, and knows all that lies hidden in each human heart, could tell how many officers and men in our Navy and Army think and feel like that highly-placed officer. It would be a great help to the cause of

[1] Bishop Bury, in *Russian Life To-day* (Mowbray), page 265.

truth, if they would only speak out and declare themselves on the Lord's side. But we have no right to judge men who are by nature so reserved that their faith in Christ and their communion with God are to them a secret and a treasure too sacred to be talked about except in some rare moment of unusual confidence. Elijah thought himself the only true believer in the land. He must have experienced a great joy as well as received a sharp rebuke when the Lord set him right by saying, "Yet have I left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."[1]

150. Resignation—its Secret.—The widow of an officer who lost his life when trying to help his friend wrote to some one I know. I have permission to quote a few sentences. She said, "I am quite happy in my hero's death. It was all so perfect. He tried to help his friend, and was killed instantly. His life was very beautiful. No one had more happiness or richer blessings than he and I; so I can let him go, and thank God for all His love, and His great mercies."

She was able to look on the bright side, able to see the sunlight and the colours of the rainbow when the cloud in her sky was very dark. By thinking of her husband's unselfish devotion to his friend, of the painless death which took him in the very act of a loving deed, and by counting up God's past mercies to them both, she was helped

[1] 1 Kings xix. 18.

to carry her burden of sorrow. It is not always easy to do this; there are few people to whom it would come naturally; to many it would be almost impossible without the grace of God. But His "grace is sufficient" for every one, and His "strength is made perfect in weakness."[1]

151. Restored.—The soldier must never show cowardice in face of the enemy. He who flinches may endanger the lives of his comrades, and possibly demoralize them.

A man of unblemished record had unaccountably so failed in action. He was sentenced to death; but before the sentence was confirmed, his regimental officer reported that he had been ill and may not have been quite himself when the lapse occurred. While his case was under consideration, the delinquent performed an act of bravery so notable that under other circumstances he would certainly have been recommended for distinction. All the facts of the case were laid before Sir John French. For his gallant conduct the man was reinstated, and the whole sad case wiped off his record. The comment of one who describes the incident is "Doubtless the British Army has thereby won another hero."

This incident illustrates a principle which is true of other failures in life besides that of cowardice in the face of danger. A man falls into sin, and does a grievous wrong to his own soul and to the souls of others. He may know himself to be for-

[1] 2 Cor. xii. 9.

given by God for Christ's sake. But he cannot help feeling that he is under a cloud. He has forfeited his own self-respect; he is despised and distrusted by his fellow men. So his happiness and power of serving others are both spoiled. Let him resolve on one thing. Like that soldier in disgrace who retrieved his character by an act of conspicuous bravery, let him also do something in the way of self-sacrifice or hard duty in that very sphere of action where he failed before—something to wipe out the stain and make amends for the injury once wrought by him. If that be done in the right spirit, it will help to make a new man of him.

The story of Zacchæus supplies a Bible parallel to this principle. Despised and hated by those who knew him as an unscrupulous and rapacious tax-collector, his character became changed and purified with the new-born faith awakened in him by the voice and touch of the living Christ. His resolution was formed at once; he must make restitution for his past misconduct. "Behold, Lord," he said, "the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold."[1]

152. Reticence in Religion.[2]—A clergyman wrote a letter to *The Times*,[3] in which he said: "A few days ago I was chatting with soldiers at the Rest Camp, avoiding, as I had promised, the subject of religion. One man, a Mohammedan, made

[1] St. Luke xix. 8. [2] See also No. 198.
[3] April 8, 1915.

the following remark: 'Sahib, one thing in this war I cannot understand. I wish you would explain it to me. We all believe in God. These Hindus, these Sikhs, we Musulmans, you Christians, all believe that God is the Supreme Ruler and Guide. How is it then that you people never speak of Him, and we soldiers do not pray to Him? He is our Ruler; but how can He be pleased with us and prosper us if we ignore Him? How can we expect Him to bless us with victory, whilst we neglect to worship and serve Him?'"

This shows what a Mohammedan soldier thinks of our attitude towards religion. Surely we do not need to expose ourselves to the charge of being traitors to God, in order to avoid the blunders of indiscreet proselytizers.

It is sad that so many well-meaning persons should be indiscreet, and by their blunders close the door of opportunity against wiser champions of the truth, who might succeed where they only fail. But that is no excuse for wiser men to remain silent, when they could help others who are seeking for God. Sometimes reticence about religion means disloyalty to Christ. It is well to remember the Divine source of those words, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh";[1] and then to act upon the injunction, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upraideth not, and it shall be given him.[2]

153. Retribution.—When the Germans first em-

[1] St. Matthew xii. 34. [2] St. James i. 5.

ployed poisonous gas against the Russians they were "hoist with their own petard." "A change of wind carried the gases back towards one position in the German trenches, where respirators had evidently not been provided; for the Russians say that the shrieks of the German soldiers in the throes of their own poison were horrible to hear."[1] One other result of their use of this inhuman method of warfare was to infuriate the Russian reserves and to awaken in the usually placid Moujiks a passionate desire for revenge which has already been partially satisfied.

Neither nations nor individual men can be guilty of cruel acts or wrong-doing without punishment, sooner or later, following. Sometimes retribution comes swiftly, as in the case of those Germans who used the poisonous gas. In other cases it is delayed; but the day of reckoning will surely come in the end for all wicked doers. Most terrible of all will it be when deferred to the day of final Judgment.

154. Reverence.—A regiment was passing through the West End of London. Among the crowd who stood to watch them marching by, was a white-haired man, evidently a gentleman. As he looked on the body of magnificent men who had volunteered to serve their country, and if need be to die in her defence, he reverently raised his hat and stood at attention. The soldiers and their officers saw and smiled with evident pleasure and appreciation. The crowd stared at him as though he were a freak. How

[1] *The Times*, June 14, 1915.

much better if they had followed his example and added a hearty cheer to encourage those brave self-sacrificing men! They lost the touch of a great inspiration.

How are we to account for this? How may we explain it? Some would call it "a want of imagination;" or it might be put down to the shy nature of the English race—the reserve which keeps people from any show of demonstrativeness in public.

I am afraid we must add one thing more—want of reverence; the dulness or deadness of that instinct which moves all refined and spiritual natures to bow in conscious homage before the beauty of goodness and nobility. It was strongly felt and fearlessly displayed by that solitary white-haired gentleman; it was neither felt nor shown by the common crowd. There is the same want of reverence everywhere—for things sacred and Divine; for the ordinances of God in Bible and Sacrament; for the Sabbath Day and the House of Prayer; for innocence and purity and religious fervour in other human souls. It is an ugly feature of the age we live in, an outcome of that intellectual spirit which is devoid of faith.

155. Reversion to original Type.—In a pamphlet, written by a Prussian, entitled *Why Germany will be Defeated*, the writer said: "Modern Protestant Germany is to-day materialistic to the backbone. While pursuing a course of studies at one of the German Universities some years ago, I found that, outside the definitely Catholic element, there

was not a single professor or student in the University who believed in the existence of God or in man's survival of physical death. And if there really existed any such person, I am confident that he would not have had the moral courage to admit it."

This witness is specially valuable as coming from within the German Empire. Her people were once distinguished for deep and strong religious convictions. Her land was the cradle of the glorious Reformation. She gave birth to some of the noblest scholars and theologians of the eighteenth century. But when her military rulers and cultured classes abjured their faith in Revealed Religion, they also abandoned in scorn its teaching; professing contempt for the hallowing influence of love and even for the dictates of common humanity. It is a case of "Reversion to original type"—a return to the barbarism of their ancestors who sacrificed to Odin and Thor.

As with the nation, so is it with the individual. If a man has been led out of the darkness of sin into the light and beauty of the Gospel, so as to be influenced for good and changed in character by its Divine revelation; and if he afterwards renounces his faith in Christ, and "counts the blood of the covenant an unholy thing,"[1] his moral decadence will keep pace with his spiritual declension; the whole nature of the man will be changed for evil; his heart will grow harder and his conduct of life more unprincipled than it was before his conversion. "The last state of that man is worse than the first."[2]

[1] Heb. x. 29. [2] St. Luke xi. 26.

156. The Sabbath Day and the House of God.—A special correspondent of *The Times*, writing on November 1, 1914, from the Pas de Calais, said: "Walking along the seashore this morning, two miles from a town, and well within the sound of the great guns in action on the coast some twenty miles away, I came across a solitary Scots private—strong, clear-headed, and well-spoken; straight from the trenches at Ypres—who had eyes for nothing but the sea. . . . He soon explained the reason of his lonely promenade along the beach. He had been fighting continuously for three months, without—as he put it—a moment's rest. Then, to his great delight, he had been sent away from the firing-line for a day or two on transport work. He had had no sleep the previous night; but, tired as he was, he had been unable to resist the lure of the sea. Without affectation—indeed with a modesty which is natural to the great bulk of our soldiers—he told me that he was gratifying an intense desire to see the shores of England again. He did not see the cliffs of Dover as he wished—a curious haze hung over the narrow seas—but the nearness of the British coast gave him 'a kind of homely feeling.'"

In the stress and strain of modern life, with its warfare against poverty, or the selfishness of rival competitors in trade, or "the sin that doth so easily beset," the soul of each man needs its resting-time. The Sabbath-day is God's gracious provision to meet this need, and His House of Prayer is the place of outlook, whence those who love Him and believe in a future life, may look across the narrow straits for a

glimpse of the Home beyond. With what longing hearts do some come there! The haze of uncertainty may at times obscure the vision, or again the cool fresh breezes of assurance may sweep the mists away. All have not the same clear-sighted faith. But there is in all true hearts the same hunger which ought to be satisfied when they come.

The correspondent has not told us what he said to that homesick Scotsman. But we may take for granted that he gave him the latest news and the best from the dear Homeland—something cheering and encouraging for him to carry back to the muddy trenches. Do we preachers, to whom these longing souls turn, satisfy the hunger that draws them to meet us? Only when we tell them of the Saviour's love and His power to keep and strengthen and comfort. Then do we help them to see something of the Heavenly vision; then will they go back to the toil and drudgery of their weekday life—satisfied.

157. The Sacred and the Profane.– One afternoon my attention was arrested by the placard of an evening newspaper just out. It set forth in big capital letters two items of news—and two only—which would be likely to interest passers-by and induce them to buy a copy of the paper. This was what I read:—

BATTLE
RAGING NEAR
YPRES
GATWICK—LATE WIRE

It seemed strange that the person who produced this poster had not enough imagination (to say nothing of good taste) to see the glaring and hideous incongruity of the thing. We may, however, presume that he was sufficiently in touch with the public taste to know that there were people who could take an interest in horse-racing, and put a bet on some "favourite," while their fellow-countrymen were fighting and dying in defence of home and country only a few miles from the English Channel. There always have been, and always will be two opposite types of character—two sets of people—those whose hearts and sympathies may be appealed to on behalf of the sufferings and sorrows of others; and those whose tastes are sordid and selfish, unfeeling and unspiritual.

Every year on Good Friday—that day of sacred and solemn associations—when numbers of reverent believers are drawn by the sound of Church bells to a "Three Hours' Service" in Commemoration of our Lord's death upon the Cross, great crowds of unthinking loud-laughing people are attracted by some flaming programmes to the Music Hall or Cinematograph Show.

Nothing can ever change the mental or emotional attitude of such people but the grace of God. They need the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit. He alone can open their eyes to see things in their true proportions. Then, as "a new creature in Christ Jesus," the inclinations and tastes of each one will be refined, and that which is profane and hollow will be discarded in the presence of things sacred and divine.

158. Sacrifice—whole-hearted.—In Petrograd there is a restaurant, once the favourite resort of gay Russian officers, where a brilliantly-uniformed band used to play during the dinner hour. Soon after the war broke out, Mr. Stanley Washburn, who had known the place well in former years, revisited it. The rooms and corridors were all deserted, the hangings were gone, the mirrors boarded up, dust collecting on everything. Finding the manager, he asked him for the reason of the change. The answer he received was—"War. For some days my rooms were used for the mobilization of troops. Here they came to receive their arms and uniforms. From this (dining) room nine hundred went out to the front."

"But your business?" was the next question.

"It has been ruined."

"No doubt the Government paid you for your rooms?"

He turned round sharply as he replied: "Paid? What for? It is our war, and each man must contribute what he can. We are all doing it, and gladly."

The same kind of thing had happened, he said, or was in progress, in ninety-five other halls and restaurants in Petrograd alone, and "all was done freely, gladly, and heartily."[1]

Would that England were inspired by the same spirit of lofty patriotism and willing sacrifice! And would that the entire Church of Christ in our beloved land were moved by a holy enthusiasm, born of the

[1] *Field Notes from the Russian Front*, by Stanley Washburn (Melrose), p. 30.

strong deep conviction that the war against sin is our war; that the call to sacrifice is for all those who in their baptism were sealed with the sign of the Cross, and pledged thereby as soldiers of Christ; that they who cannot themselves go forth to fight against sin and selfishness and superstition and devil-worship, might learn the joy and privilege of giving freely, gladly, and heartily out of the abundance of their stores. We sometimes sing, "The Son of God goes forth to War." But what are we actually doing and giving? What sacrifices are we making, to uphold the hands and insure the final victory of those "who follow in His train?"

159. Satan foiled.—While returning from the fishing grounds in the North Sea, the look-out man of the Grimsby trawler *Cydonia* observed a German submarine in the distance. The skipper ordered the engines to go full-speed ahead, and every ounce of steam was put on. But the submarine soon proved herself the faster of the two.

Gradually but surely she overhauled the trawler. By skilful manœuvring however she was held at bay, and for about two hours the chase was kept up. Then, finding that he could no longer elude or escape from his crafty foe in the deep waters of the open sea, the trawler's skipper made for the shore. For a time the submarine followed, until, realizing the risk he ran by going into shallow water, her commander gave up the chase, and the trawler escaped.

There are Christian men who, in their search for the truth and in their desire to win knowledge which

may help themselves and others, have ventured into the deep waters of religious or scientific investigation. For a time all goes well. Then the enemy of souls appears; intellectual doubts assail them; faith and courage are put to a severe test. At length the strain becomes too great to be safely borne; and shelter is sought in the shallower waters of a childlike faith which leaves behind the profound mysteries and problems that have proved too hazardous for the soul's preservation. Just the A B C of the Gospel is learned over again; its simple truths that make men wise unto Salvation bring comfort and peace to the soul that was in jeopardy. The spiritual enemy does not like these quiet sheltered waters; he is not at home in them; they disconcert him and make him afraid. So he is forced to retire baffled and disappointed.

160. Save the Children.—Among the hundred or more citizens of the U.S., who perished when the *Lusitania* was torpedoed by a German submarine, was Mr. A. Vanderbilt, the well-known millionaire-sportsman. When he knew what had happened, he went out of his cabin and called to his valet, "Here, boy, come and let us save the kiddies." During the short time left before the ship went down, these two men went everywhere searching for the children, collecting them together, passing them along to the gangways leading to the boats.

In years to come, Alfred Vanderbilt will be thought of and spoken of not as the millionaire or sportsman who used to drive his coach-and-four

from London to Brighton in the season, but as "the man who saved the children." Nor will that last act in his life, with its generous thought of the little ones, have been left unrecorded by their guardian angels. "For," said He Who is the children's Friend and Saviour, "I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven."[1]

It is a grand object for any man to set before him—trying to save the children. Dr. Barnardo was among those who led the way here. How his voice rang out with the cry, "Help me to save the children." We can all do something, either for our own, or for "some one else's bairns." The way to do this is to keep temptation out of their way until they can understand it's danger; we should teach them that. We should instil early into their minds a love for all things true, pure, honourable, holy. We can give them books of the right sort to read. We can pray for them and with them. During the voyage across life's ocean, we can warn the elder ones against the treacherous enemy of their souls, and we can show them where to find and how to put on, each one for himself, the life-belt of Salvation; that is a personal faith in the mighty power and love of Jesus Christ; so that, if disaster comes on them, they will be able to rise above the swirling waters, and be rescued, and brought home in safety.

161. Self-control.—The psychology of war evokes many a strange contrast in human nature. The

[1] St. Matt. xviii. 10.

battle-field arouses dormant passions which might otherwise have been thought to be non-existent. Men who are naturally kind and gentle there become for the time being possessed with a spirit of hideous fury and callous indifference to the sufferings they inflict on their enemies. This has been explained on the ground that a man's real individuality becomes merged temporarily in the foreign personality of the mass of other men. The worst elements of human nature then predominate. But when the action is over, the man returns to his better self; the instincts of his own true heart again assert themselves. Here is an instance of that: "In a hospital on the Bzura front a German soldier lay stricken. Over his cot bent a great Russian, who said to him in soothing tones, "Do not worry; you are among friends. Forget that you are a prisoner; and remember only that, while you are wounded, you are our guest."[1]

To a lesser degree the same principle may be seen elsewhere. Men, in whom are naturally the elements of affection and sympathy, become hard and bitter when they meet those who differ from them in the arena of politics or religious controversy. In the heat of party-strife, men who are true Christians sometimes forget to practise the first elements of brotherly love and forbearance for which they pray in secret. When the dispute is over, they would readily do any act of kindness in private life for those to whom they have said harsh words in public debate. There is however one difference

[1] Stanley Washburn.

between the ordinary soldier and the Christian. For the former fighting is compulsory on the field of battle. In obedience to orders, in defence of his country, in loyalty to his comrades, he must strike and wound and kill his brother-man; amid his surroundings he cannot help the fury of battle inflaming his heart and limbs. The Christian ought never to allow even a passing hatred of others to take possession of him. While contending for the truth, he should be self-controlled; gentle as well as strong; courteous while firm. He may use great plainness of speech; but he should avoid all harshness of tone or manner; it leaves a rankling wound easier to make than to cure. In so doing he will perhaps fail to score some temporary triumph over his opponent; but he may also win a lasting victory for the Captain of his Salvation, and maybe turn the enemy of a day into the friend of a life-time.

162. Self-denial—of Children.—I have just been reading a letter written by a school-girl, during the holidays (Christmas, 1914).

She says: "We have been making, among other things, at the school, Christmas puddings for the soldiers in France. We gave up our prizes to buy the materials for these. I think everybody ought to give up something; and a great many schools are doing this: so the Queen is giving a little badge or certificate to every child who gives up a prize."

In this simple act of self-denial the children are taught the beauty and glory of giving up something they greatly value, in order to send a token of sympathy and appreciation to the brave soldiers endur-

ing the hardships and dangers of battle for King and country. The lesson must be well worth the sacrifice it involves. When we give up anything for the sake of another, the action itself is blessed to our own characters. In that sense we receive more than we give. And furthermore, a remembrance is made for ever by the King Himself, Who has said that even "the cup of cold water given in His name" shall not lose its reward.

163. Self-denial—in Russia.—"I have decided to prohibit for ever in Russia the Government Sale of Alcohol." This declaration was made by the Tsar at the beginning of the War. It meant the sacrifice of a large revenue brought annually into the Imperial Coffers.

"What a magnificent instance of national self-denial!" That would perhaps be the first thought of many, when reading or hearing of this Royal edict. But all who have eyes to see below the surface would rather read in it an act of supreme wisdom and forethought for the welfare of millions. When they were first mobilized the soldiers resented, so far as they dared, the prohibition of their favourite beverage, Vodka. But the wives they were leaving behind had the common-sense of true love to petition the Tsar that he would make the prohibition permanent. And the whole Slav race is sure to benefit in the end by a decrease in crime, and an increase in *moral*, contentment and prosperity.[1]

[1] Had the Imperial ukase not been published, it is estimated that the Russian nation would have spent during the current year at least £100,000,000 on strong drink.

It was a fine example to the civilized world. Should we not hail with welcome any Government strong and brave enough to discourage our annual expenditure of £170,000,000 on intoxicating drink?

"A large reduction in the National revenues!"

Yes; but a splendid counter-balancing gain in National character.

And, as with nations, so with individuals. Self-denial for conscience' sake is always worth the cost, and worth far more. The rewards of personal sacrifice for the good of others will never fail to outweigh any loss in the end.

164. Self-esteem.—During the month of April, 1915, the Grand Master of the Freemasons' Lodge at Liége wrote to the Lodge at Darmstadt suggesting that an appeal should be made to all the Armies in the field to conduct the war in a spirit of humanity, and also that a commission of neutral freemasons, with one German and one Belgian representative, should inquire into the manner in which the war had hitherto been conducted. The German Lodge replied that an appeal for humanity to German generals and soldiers was unnecessary, "because they are Germans!" The German soldiers were not to be insulted by the suggestion that there was any doubt about their humanity! That is to say, they would listen to no accusations against Germans, because, being Germans, they were incapable of doing anything that was wrong! For the same reason, they would not submit their conduct to the judgment of the civilized world. In other words,

they would only be a law unto themselves. Being Germans they are superior to any opinions or possible censure from other nations.

It was a strange position to assume. Its inconsistency with actual facts ought to have been clearly evident to the Darmstadt Freemasons, if they had read any of the reports of their own Law-Courts, in which charges are brought by Germans themselves against other Germans, and sentences are passed on those who are proved guilty of crime and wrong-doing.

I do not suppose any other nation ever has been (at least to the same extent) so deluded by this mental and moral obsession. But in every country are to be found in large numbers individual instances of the kind—people who hold a very high opinion of themselves, whose self-esteem is so great that they must never be insulted by criticism or doubt on the part of others. Vanity and conceit blind them to their own short-comings and selfish disregard of others. Because Germany believes that Germans can do no wrong, she has horrified the world by her treachery and inhumanity. And when anyone is puffed up with vain-glory and self-opinion, he is certain to do wrong in the very way in which he imagines himself to be immaculate. "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?"[1] exclaimed Hazael indignantly, when Elisha wept in predicting the horrible crimes he knew this man would perpetrate. The prophet was right, for the very next day Hazael began his course of crime by

[1] 2 Kings viii. 13.

treacherously murdering the King of Israel.[1] "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."[2]

165. Self-reliance.—"We do not like to see people in England searching along the coasts of the Mediterranean for possible Allies, when a great part of the manhood of the country remains untrained and unorganized."[3]—*Morning Post.*

In her struggle for existence and in her firm resolve to defend the rights of humanity against a barbarous military tyranny, England has had to learn that there is one thing far better than leaning upon other nations. It is the grand quality of self-reliance. And as with the nation, so is it also with each individual man who would prove himself worthy of winning or retaining all that is best worth having in life. He must learn that there is something far better than counting on family interests or the friends he may be able to make; namely to cultivate and put forth the latent powers of his own mind and character.

But self-reliance is not the only consideration. There is one thing more important still—reliance on God. The two are quite compatible with each other. Before his fellow-men the Christian bears

[1] 2 Kings viii. 15. [2] 1 Cor. x. 12.

[3] The same thing might be said of the pathetic and pitiable credulity with which so many people accepted the current (and absurd) rumour, during the autumn of 1914, that vast numbers of Russian troops were passing through England (by night!) on their way to help the Expeditionary Force in France.

himself as a self-reliant man, because he does not lean on others, nor is he swayed by the fear or favour of the world. But the secret and source of his independent spirit is his dependence on Christ. He has learned to look away from self to his Saviour, and Jesus Christ has become the new power in his life; so that he is able to say with a glorious self-assertiveness "I can do all things," just because he can add "through Christ Who strengtheneth me."

166. Self-Renunciation.—When the Coalition Government was formed, at a meeting of the Unionist Party[1] Mr. Bonar Law made a fine patriotic speech, closing with these words:—

"Every member of the Cabinet, and every member of the party, must go into this new enterprise with something of the spirit of the glowing words used by Danton: 'May my name be polluted, but may France be free.'"

Would that our public men were always animated by such a spirit as that! It is needed in the Church as well as in the State. If every clergyman and Church officer and Sunday School teacher and each Communicant would put self absolutely in the background and be willing, for the sake of our Lord and His Gospel, to work without human praise or popularity or "promotion," how strong the Church would be! It was this spirit of exalted patriotism that moved St. Paul to say, "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."[2] Its most

[1] May 26, 1915. [2] Romans ix. 3.

beautiful expression of all perhaps is to be found in the reply of John the Baptist to his disciples, when he renounced all personal claims in favour of his Divine Master, saying, "He must increase, but I must decrease."[1]

167. Self-Sacrifice (1).—In a trench, 400 yards beyond the dressing-station, an officer was lying badly wounded. To cross that zone of fire by daylight meant almost certain death, and the hour was 10 a.m. But Dr. D. C. Turnbull of the R.A.M.C. took the risk and won through. When he reached the wounded man, he found that an operation was necessary. He could not, however, get beyond the communication trench without greatly endangering the life of his patient. As a heavy German fire was being then directed towards the place where he was, he lay down in the trench beside the wounded man, and spent the rest of the day there, compressing an artery by hand to check the bleeding. When at length the welcome darkness fell, with the help of an orderly he lifted his patient, and between them they carried him safely through. But the perilous journey back proved fatal to the brave doctor. He received a shot through the lung, from which he subsequently died.

This brave act holds an honoured place in the very forefront of heroic deeds; no finer instance could be recorded of splendid devotion to duty. But the chief beauty and glory of it lies in the spirit of self-sacrifice deliberately incurred with the one object

[1] St. John iii. 30.

of saving the life of another. Some would call it superlative human goodness. It would be more true to say that it is a spark of the love that is Divine—a ray of the original sinlessness of man before the Fall, when God made him in His own likeness. The one perfect example of this is found in the Atonement of Christ our Lord. So He taught His disciples, when He said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends. . . ."[1]

168. Self-Sacrifice (2).—During the battle of the Aisne, a company of British soldiers were sent to occupy a village which was supposed to be clear of the enemy. As they entered the long narrow street, from a farmhouse on the right a man dashed out, who afterwards proved to be a private in one of our regiments. He had been captured the day before by a party of German cavalry, and was held prisoner at the farm, where the Germans were in ambush. Seeing the peril of his own countrymen, who, all unsuspectingly, were marching into the trap waiting for them, he decided on taking the risk, so as to warn them of their danger. Although he knew it meant death for him, this brave man made the dash out, and warned them just in time, and then fell with a dozen bullets in him from the rifles of the ambushed Germans behind. A non-commissioned officer, who witnessed the whole tragedy, in describing it afterwards, wrote: "We buried him next

[1] St. John xv. 13, 14.

day with military honours. His identification-disc and everything else was missing, so that we could only put over his grave the tribute, 'He saved others.' There wasn't a dry eye among us when we laid him to rest in that little village."

What a glorious epitaph was that—"he saved others," inscribed on his wooden cross by those very men who had been sáved by him! He was only a private soldier; but he was a hero of the highest rank. Those who loved him and now mourn over his loss will only know hereafter how he died. How proud they will then feel of him! And how many more are there like him, who, in this war, have manifested the same spirit of splendid self-sacrifice? They wear no Victoria Cross; but may we not believe that He Who died on the Cross of Calvary to save them will give them a share of His meritorious Death and Resurrection, and they shall wear a crown that fadeth not away?

We cannot all die to save others; but we can all live to do so, if Christ be our inspiration and our strength. Then, when death does come, perhaps angel-hands will inscribe on our tombstone in letters invisible to human eyes the words, "He saved others."

169. Service—not Ease or Fame.—An English lady who was in Germany when the war broke out, after a prolonged and trying stay in that country, returned to her home in Salisbury. She related the following striking incident: "In the early days of the war, so great was the eagerness of ladies in

Berlin and elsewhere to undertake Red Cross work, that the authorities found it difficult to deal with all the volunteers. So a large meeting of women was called to organize the work of nursing. One of the chief officers in the German Army Medical Service presided, and began by asking all those ladies who wished to nurse officers only to stand to the right; and the officer then said to them: 'Ladies, I now ask you to go home. Germany has no use for women who are only willing to nurse officers.'"

There are plenty of people always, who are quite willing to undertake duties which are nice, pleasant, easy, attractive. They want to pick and choose what they will do and where they will be. When a fat country living falls vacant, or a new vicar is needed for the educated and wealthy congregation of some residential London suburb or select sea-side resort, applicants are numerous and persistent. But this class of candidate leaves to others—often better men than themselves—the stress and strain of work in overgrown poor parishes, where money is hard to raise and "the position" does not improve a man's social status. This order of mind is not peculiar to the Clergy. It abounds in all classes of professions. Only it is seen at its worst where it should be altogether absent. If only this form of human weakness and selfishness could be treated like the similar spirit shown by the exclusive Berlin ladies, and its patrons sent back to the homes whence they came, the work of the Church would be done with less show but more reality—

"The work which makes for service not for fame,
Which buries self and setteth forth Thy Name."

170. Serving—in Little Ways.—Mr. Lloyd George concluded a memorable speech he made at Bangor,[1] by saying: "War is a time of sacrifice and service. Some can render one service, some another; some here and some there. Some can render great assistance, others but little. In the old Welsh legend there is a story of a man who was given a series of what appeared to be impossible tasks to perform ere he could reap the desires of his heart. Amongst other things he had to do was to recover every grain of seed that had been sown in a large field, and bring it all in, without missing one, by sunset. He came to an ant-hill, and won all the hearts and enlisted the sympathies of its industrious little people. They spread over the field, and before sundown the seed was all in, except one; and as the sun was setting over the Western horizon a lame ant hobbled along with that grain also.

"Some of us have youth and vigour and suppleness of limb; and some of us are crippled with years or infirmities, and we are at best but little ants. But we can all limp along with some share of our country's burden, and thus help her in this terrible hour to win the desire of her heart."

The legend has its message for those who are fighting in the war that shall only cease when the "Desire of all nations shall come"—Jesus, the Prince of Peace; and especially for those who cannot do

[1] February 28, 1915.

great things in the world. Great men are few in number, and they all have to learn that some things must be done, which they are powerless to accomplish alone. To win the hearts and enlist the sympathies of little people is often their only way of succeeding. Let the little people respond gladly and cheerfully. It may be only some very humble duty you are called on to take up; or you may think that the little you can do would never be missed. Perhaps it really counts for more than you suppose. Even the aged and infirm and lame ones can do something. Do not let the sun of your life go down before you have done your best—your very best—in the way of sacrifice and service for the Master and His cause.

171. The Sign of the Cross.—A Moscow correspondent of *The Times*[1] wrote: "One night early in August, I went to see a friend's regiment leaving for the Front. It was not the soldiers who impressed me, although they marched as only Russian soldiers can march. It was the people lining the streets. They were nearly all of the poorest classes; mujiks, small shop-keepers, and workmen with their women folk. They did not cheer as an English crowd would have cheered. In fact they were strangely silent, one might have said unenthusiastic. But as the troops marched past, each man in the crowd raised his cap, and crossed himself with a look in his eyes that, even to the veriest dullard, could have conveyed only one message."

[1] Russian Supplement, January 15, 1915.

The Russian peasant may be ignorant and superstitious; but there is in him a deep rich vein of religion. "Each man in the crowd raised his cap, and crossed himself with a look in his eyes that could have conveyed only one message." It was the message of a heartfelt prayer to our Father in heaven, to bless and protect the brave soldiers who were going forth to defend home and country. It was the message of a strong simple faith clinging through the dark to the Cross of Jesus Christ. And in that faith I read the assurance of hope for the future of the Russian people. For the Cross has always been and always will be the centre of true religion; and they who can spell its message gleaming brightly through the gloom are on the highroad from sin and sorrow to Heaven and happiness. That is true for all; for the free-born Englishman with his liberal education as much as for the poor Russian Slav emerging slowly from the centuries of dull despair. VIA CRUCIS VIA LUCIS. IN HOC SIGNO VINCES.

172. Sorrow and Hope.—From a window in the City Hall in Furnes, late one afternoon, Albert, King of the Belgians, watched the setting sun. Someone who then saw him noticed how sad he looked. He bore an air of deep depression, as though he was thinking of the coming night with its darkness, as a symbol of the gloom and shadowy uncertainty of his country's near future. If the onlooker was right in so interpreting the mind of that sorely-afflicted noble-souled King, he was equally true in the comment he adds to express his

own conviction and forecast of the future yet beyond, "But the night is not eternal; and when it is gone, there comes another day, bringing with it a new sun."

It is but an old truth which these words express. And yet how often we need to be reminded of it. When the shadows are lengthening across the path, and we fear the growing darkness of some night of sorrow, it is hard not to feel down-hearted and to lose the comfort of faith and hope. To every one who is entering the gloom of sadness or bereavement or commercial depression, we would say, as the civilized world in its sympathy has said to the hero-king of the Belgians, "Be patient, sad heart; all will come right in time. 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.'"[1]

173. The Soul—to Save or to Lose it.—One of the most famous of Bernard Partridge's War cartoons for *Punch*[2] was entitled "Unconquerable." In the foreground are two figures—one the German Emperor; the other the King of the Belgians. In the background are smoking ruins and homeless fugitives. The Kaiser, standing in the attitude of an arrogant and successful bully, snarls out the taunt: "So, you see—you've lost everything!" With head erect, and sword still drawn, King Albert proudly answers, "Not my soul."

He might have kept his throne—but with dishonour. He might have spared his country the horrors of a ruthless invasion—but at the expense

[1] Psalm xxx. 5. [2] October 21, 1914.

of its freedom as an independent state. Wisely and nobly King Albert had sacrificed the present for the future, the material for the moral and spiritual. He had "lost all" which an ignoble selfish man would value; but he had kept his conscience clear. So he could fearlessly say, "Not my soul—not my honour; I have not betrayed my high trust." He had sacrificed personal ease and present safety; but he is secure from the haunting remorse of having acted wrongly and unworthily. His name will shine on history's page in letters of gold.

The temptation to do wrong in order to avoid misfortune or pain or loss is sometimes very strong. Ease and profit, pleasure and popularity may all be on the side of submission. But if it be at the expense of right principle; if it means the betrayal of Him Who died to save us from that very sin which now tempts with such insistence; then to yield means the loss of the most precious thing any one can have, to hold in trust from God—the eternal soul. Better lose all than lose that. "For whosoever shall save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"[1]

174. Sowing and Reaping.—On *August* 4, 1914, the German Chancellor (Herr von Bethmann-

[1] St. Matthew xvi. 25, 26. The Greek word for "life" and "soul" in these verses is the same—ψυχὴ.

Hollweg) announced in the Reichstag that, because "necessity knows no law," Germany's troops had forcibly entered Belgium and Luxemburg, thereby violating her solemn treaty with both countries. In his speech he admitted that this was "contrary to the dictates of International Law," and that in so doing "we are committing a wrong." On *May* 28, 1915, this same Imperial Chancellor dealt in the Reichstag with the entry of Italy into the war. In impassioned language he inveighed against Italy's "violation of faith" and her "disloyalty to a treaty" (i.e. the Triple Alliance), as though Germany never by his own confession had broken her plighted troth![1] He complained that Italy might have had all she wanted by waiting; but she refused the "guarantee of Germany's word;" adding, "There was no occasion for distrust (!)"

These two speeches in the Reichstag, read together in the light of history, afford a striking illustration of the way in which sometimes a nation or a man has to pay the penalty similar in kind to the wrong previously inflicted on another. And frequently the punishment is allowed to run its course because no one can trust the wrong-doer. By his glaring violation of the rights of another he has forfeited the confidence which otherwise might have saved him in his hour of need.

We must not dogmatize in our speculations about future punishment. But we may solemnly warn every one that unforgiven sin is likely to be dealt

[1] The Chancellor entirely ignored Italy's real reasons for breaking the chains of her old Alliance.

with on the Day of Judgment "after its kind." "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."[1]

175. The Spirit of Sacrifice—wanting.—After returning from a fortnight's visit (including Easter) with our soldiers in France, the Bishop of London presided at the opening meeting of the London Diocesan Conference. In his address he said that "he looked upon the 200 young lives given every day (even when there was no battle), chiefly because of the lack of ammunition to keep down the enemy's fire, as slaughtered by those who did not sacrifice anything which could enable them to be saved. It was ignorance of the facts which was at the bottom of the mischief."[2]

What shall we say about those other lives that are spent, in times of peace and war alike, in the Master's service, fighting the battles of the Cross against sin and Satan in heathen and Mohammedan lands? And what of the millions of souls held in bondage there, whom these few brave and loving champions of the truth are giving their very lives to save? They need munitions of war out there, in their efforts to storm and break up the trenches of the enemy. But alas! there are thousands of nominal Christians in England, who fail to supply their needs, because they will not deny themselves the luxury of expensive living and the pleasures of the motor-car and the theatre.

[1] Galatians vi. 7. [2] *The Times*, May 6, 1915.

176. Spiritual Neutrality.—This was the title of a leading article in *The Times*[1] concerning the attitude taken by the Pope who had declined to express an opinion or to pass a sentence of condemnation on the crimes committed by the Germans in Belgium and France, and also on the sinking of the *Lusitania*. He had granted "interviews" to the representatives of a German-American newspaper and also of the Paris *Liberté*. To the former he was friendly; to the latter he spoke in weak and faltering tones; repeating the enormous assurance that he is "the representative of God upon earth." "But," he went on to say, "the war places the interests of the Holy See in danger; and we are at the present moment in an uncertain situation." The Germans had denied the charges of outrage, murder and sacrilege brought against them; and this "representative of God upon earth" (!) who claims infallibility, was either unable to come to a decision or else he dared not speak out and denounce the crimes which he knew had been perpetrated against thousands of his own flock. Was Benedict XV afraid of the Germans? or was there between him and the Kaiser a secret understanding about the temporal power of the Roman Curia in Italy? In any case, the spectacle was a shameful and pitiable one. "Spiritual Neutrality" when a great religious leader is asked to denounce a hideous wrong against defenceless men, women and children! His attitude may well have caused amazement and grief to French and Belgian Catholics, and confirmed

[1] June 25, 1915.

English Protestants in their distrust and dislike of Pontifical claims.

The same position has often been taken by persons of lesser degree. It may be some question between financial integrity and dishonesty, or the moral character and effects of doubtful amusements. A man of good social position and wealth holds the power, in his own family and among his neighbours, of expressing an opinion which would carry weight. But he declines to speak out. Some vested interests of his may be at stake; or he may lack the moral courage. He has no strong convictions moving him to utter brave words. And yet he claims to be a Christian, and perhaps holds office in his Church. When great principles are in danger, or the young are exposed to temptation, and the nominal Christian refuses to take a definite stand, his attitude may be labelled "Spiritual Neutrality." It is a miserable and contemptible thing, implying the want of spiritual power and the absence of spiritual reality.

177. The Spring of the Year.—Most people in England will remember the spring and early summer of 1915, as a season when Nature appeared to them more beautiful than she had ever seemed before. Never had the lilac and hawthorn smelled so sweet; never had the leafy woods or garden-flowers looked so lovely as then. Few of us were perhaps fully conscious of the reason for this. It was the contrast presented to the mind and emotions between the horrors of War and the peacefulness of Nature. In the one we were forced to look at the work of

Satan, using as his tools the ambitions and selfishness and brutal instincts of wicked men. In the other our eyes rested on the uplifting, soul-comforting handiwork of the God of love.

And also, when we thought of those lands elsewhere ravaged by the ruthless invader, we learned to love our own dear country as we had never loved her before, and to pray that she might be left inviolate. The sufferings of outraged Belgium and the Northern French provinces showed us how thankful we should be if we could escape the fate which desolated them.

If we were wiser and more thoughtful, we should see with clearer vision the contrast between the wreckage and misery that are always caused by sin, and the prosperity and happiness which are the fruits of holiness. From the life once innocent and pure, until defiled by contact with vice, we turn with a new reverence and a stronger hope to the life that is sheltered from evil by the keeping power of Jesus Christ. To look from the one to the other and see the difference between them is a revelation of the hideous character of sin and the sublime beauty of the grace of God. And it should create in our hearts not only a passionate love for goodness, but the firm and fixed resolve to guard the sanctities of home life against any threatened invasion—to cherish as a very sacred trust the young lives growing up around us, lest they be despoiled of their fair heritage of purity and peace.

178. The Stain of Guilt.—At the Presentation

Day Celebration of the University of London,[1] the Principal stated that, in the last week of July last year, the German Emperor had presented to the University sixty-seven volumes published by the Royal Library in Berlin.

As Chancellor of the University, Lord Rosebery presided at this meeting, and in the course of his speech from the chair, his lordship said: "We have been reminded that in the last week in July the German Emperor, out of the fulness of his benevolent heart, was pleased to send us a present of books, for which we are duly grateful. Within a few days he was sending out ultimatums in Europe which deliberately lighted up frightful scenes of disaster, savagery and slaughter. Therefore, whatever be our gratitude for the books, they bear the 'damned spot' such as was on the hand of Macbeth."

Thus are placed side by side, on record and in contrast, the gift of a few books and the perpetration of a colossal crime. How insignificant the one looks in comparison with the other! Nay more; those books will always be viewed as marked with a stain, which will for ever vitiate their intrinsic value. Such contrasts may sometimes be seen in the actions of less prominent persons. There are men who do good-natured things, even when they are contemplating some great wrong; more frequently perhaps after the deed has been done, which has for ever injured the soul of another. Let them know that a thousand such acts, which cost them but little, weigh as a feather in the balance against the dead

[1] May 4, 1915.

weight of one act of selfish lust, or cruel vindictive slander, or merciless advantage taken of the weakness, ignorance, or innocence of another fellow-being.

We may go even further, and accept in wise humility the burden of a great truth suggested by the same incident. Every one of us inherits by nature the guilt of original sin. All our own righteousness is as filthy rags. In comparison with the evil latent in every heart, a life of good works and kindly deeds is powerless by way of atonement. They are stained by their very touch with this unclean thing—sin. Only the healing virtue of the atoning blood of Christ can cleanse the soul; and in doing that, it removes the stain by which our gifts of love are soiled.

179. The Standard of Truth.—Towards the end of June (1915), Dr. Hertz, the chief Rabbi, made a tour through the British lines in France, for the purpose of visiting and encouraging the Jewish soldiers. At a reception of Jewish officers and men at the General Headquarters, he gave an address, in which he said: "Nothing less than England's life as a nation is at stake. In the wake of a national disaster would follow the disruption of the British Empire, which is earth's nearest realization hitherto of might coupled with justice, of power joined to mercy. Such a calamity would convulse the whole fabric of the human race. . . . As the late Colonel Goldsmid so admirably expressed it, 'Loyalty to the flag for which the sun once stood still can only deepen our loyalty to the flag on which the sun never sets.'"

That is a grand tribute of respect and praise for England, coming from such a man. His acceptance of Colonel Goldsmid's noble saying endorses a fact of supreme value for all time. The reference, of course, is to that much disputed passage about "the sun standing still upon Gibeon."[1] We shall not venture here into those troubled waters of the right interpretation of an inspired narrative. But gladly and gratefully do we welcome from the lips of a great leader of the Jewish religion in our day the principle illustrated by that Old Testament story. "The flag for which the sun (then) stood still" was the Standard of eternal Truth and Righteousness, held in trust at that time by God's chosen people Israel, afterwards to be planted in every land where the Gospel is preached. In proportion as the nation or the individual is loyal to that standard, so will there be loyalty to every principle of right, justice and true freedom. The way to keep faithful to the compacts of international and personal honour is to hold a firm grasp of the heavenly message declared by our Lord in the imperishable records of His will, revealed in the holy Bible.

180. The Steam-Roller.—When the Russian armies in Galicia had been driven back by one of Germany's swift and fiercest onslaughts, her defeat caused a good deal of anxiety in England. Speaking, however, on the position of his country at the time, a well-informed Russian said: "Russia has been spoken of as a steam-roller. If you ever

[1] Joshua x. 12, 13.

watch that machine at work, you will observe that it goes backward nearly as often as it goes forward." In other words, "Don't get downhearted, when things go a bit wrong. Only be patient, and you will soon see we shall right ourselves again. If we do lose ground to-day, we shall get it all back, and more besides, to-morrow."

Some people would be happier and more useful, if they could put this kind of philosophy into their way of looking at the drawbacks of life.

The steam-roller also suggests a further consolation. When going backward it is usually doing as much good work as when it is going forward on the road. The adverse circumstances of life may outwardly appear to set back all our plans and undo our purposes; yet sometimes they are doing a fine thing for us, in strengthening and binding together the good work begun in the days of prosperity.

181. Strength Misdirected.—When the announcement of a boxing-match between two English pugilists became known in Germany, the people there exulted in it as a sign that we as a nation failed to realize the serious nature of the struggle in which we were engaged. One man in the lower German middle-class remarked about one of these prize fighters, "Why doesn't he go and fight for his country without gloves on, instead of amusing people, whilst his brothers are dying in the field?"

There was truth and justice in that. The man who is strong enough to engage in a boxing-contest must have the physical strength and endurance to

serve in the army; he is probably more fit for doing so than the majority of those who are so engaged. And the men who will, at a time when their country needs their services, make a public exhibition of their strength and fitness, only for the sake of amusing people and earning money, deserve the scorn of friend and foe alike.

But is not the same kind of thing repeatedly done in other ways besides? and that to an enormous extent? How much human strength is wasted over trifles, which should be and could be spent in some great and noble enterprise!

There is the strength of intellect, which comes with natural mental endowments; there is the power of knowledge which is the outcome of education; and there is the gift of genius, or the capacity for organization. These varied forms of strength are often possessed by men who profess to be Christians; but they refuse to place them at the service of Christ and His cause. They keep all for their own selfish interests or hobbies; while others, not half so capable, on the human side at least, are spending all the little strength they may possess in the work which they have undertaken in the Master's vineyard. How much more good might be done in the world, if only the men who have great physical energy, or the power of wealth, or the charm and *éclat* of social distinction, would think less of the trivialities and show that do no real good, and would help their brothers who are bravely fighting against evil in the world, and perhaps dying in the field!

182. Support from Behind.—"There is a very fine description in one of Erckmann-Chatrian's tales of the conscripts at the battle of Waterloo. They had been fighting all day, fighting very bravely as Frenchmen always will. Suddenly in the evening they had a sense that there was nothing behind them. The field was empty; there was no support, and for the first time their hearts failed them. I want our soldiers to feel that they are going into action with someone behind them. They are fighting gallantly, and God alone knows what they have to face. When they are told to go forward in the face of the dread machinery of a scientific foe, they have never flinched. Do not let them one day feel that the field behind them is empty, and that there is no support. Let them hear the ring of the forges of Britain and the hammers of the anvil, and then they will say: 'Our fellows are behind us; let us go forward.' . . . I want you to fill our arsenals and our wagons with the material that will enable our troops to break through the German lines. You can only do that by filling up our reserves with plenty of shell-ammunition. Then you will hear the crack of the German steel barrier under the incessant hammering of the British guns. You will hear the cheers of the British infantry as they march through their shattered entrenchments to victory; and in that hour the engineers will know with a thrill that the workshops of Britain have won a lasting triumph for the 'Righteousness that exalteth a nation.'"[1]

[1] David Lloyd George, M.P., in a Speech at Bristol, June 12, 1915.

The "Church Militant on earth" has her armies out in the Front, fighting against sin and superstition and idolatry in heathen and Mohammedan lands. There are brave men and women who are facing hardship, sickness, privations and death, in order to plant the standard of the Cross everywhere as the symbol of a new life and a new hope for all peoples. Let them never have to think and feel that the field behind them is empty. Let them know that they have the generous support and unfailing sympathy of the Church at home. That will help to inspire them with courage and confidence. And when they have won their victories, we shall know with joy that we have a right to share in their triumph.

183. The Two Ideals.—On August 4, 1915—the solemn anniversary of our entrance into the War—there appeared in *Punch* a double-sized cartoon from the pen of that master of his art, Mr. Bernard Partridge, a cartoon that will probably rank as an historic picture. It was entitled "The Two Ideals." On the one side stands the Cross of Calvary with the Body of the Saviour nailed to it. Filling up the other half of the picture is the German Emperor, clad in his full uniform, his hand on the hilt of his sword, his face, half-turned towards the Cross, wearing the expression of a bad man found out, half-despairing but still defiant.

The picture visualizes the most important thing by far in this awful conflict, that which twelve months of its dark tragedy have revealed with increasing clearness; viz. that the present war is one

of ideas rather than of nations. It is often called a spiritual conflict. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that it is a conflict between the spiritual and the material. These are the two ideals: the one is enshrined in the Christian Faith, with its heritage of truth and honour, righteousness and compassion; the other is embodied in Prussian militarism—selfish and cruel, brutal and merciless. The two are directly antagonistic. On the Cross Jesus died that He might give life to the world. He died to save others. And although He stands alone in His divine Sonship, His unstained humanity and His atonement for our sins, yet, as His disciples, we learn from Him the meaning of Self-Sacrifice—that Love is the greatest thing in the world.

On the other hand German Materialism is self-assertive and cruelly aggressive; it aims at a larger life for itself by destroying life in others; it scoffs at Love, proclaiming its own boasted might to be the only law for itself and the world it seeks to dominate.

World-power! That was the bait and the promise held out by Satan in the wilderness temptation—only to be rejected with horror and indignation by the pure soul of the Son of God. Ambition for that same world-power is the lure that has drawn and possessed the soul of modern Germany. For this her people have contemptuously repudiated the teaching and the claims of the Crucified Saviour, with His demand for self-sacrificing love in the interests of a common brotherhood and a suffering humanity.

The struggle is always going on between these two ideals—the spiritual and the material. To

each of us comes in our lives the opportunity—indeed it is a necessity—of choosing between them both. "Am I living for Christ or for Self? Am I being crucified to the world, or am I trying to crucify what is weak in the world to my own selfish ends? Am I willing to surrender all I am and all I have for the sake of Truth and Right and Compassion? or am I trampling them under foot when they stand in the way of some personal advantage to be gained by fraud and cruelty?"

In this great war the Two Ideals are drawn large upon a wide canvas; their contrast is plainly seen in a lurid light. Equally real are they found to be in the life of each individual man, though in miniature; nor are they less clear to the inward vision of every one who realizes that in this conflict he must be on one side or the other—with Christ or against Him. The choice between these two ideals is for eternity; but the opportunity of choosing between them is ours only for to-day.

184. Temperance Reform.—The prohibition of the sale of vodka in Russia has been fruitful in beneficial consequences, including a marked decrease in the number of cases of insanity among the dipsomaniacs of the Obukhovsky Hospital in Petrograd and also of general cases of mental diseases. In a report read by Dr. A. L. Mendelson, on March 29, 1915, before the Russian Society for the Preservation of National Health, it was stated that "From July to December, 1913, there were recorded in Petrograd 97 suicides, while for the

same period in 1914 there were only 14. The same phenomenon was observed in Warsaw, where, during the first half of 1914, there were recorded 419 suicides, and during the second half only 205. The reduction of the number of small loans made by the pawnshops and the increase of the deposits in the savings-banks were among the further gratifying results of temperance. For the first two months of 1915 the savings-banks of Petrograd received deposits exceeding the figures for the corresponding months of 1914 by one-and-a-half million roubles, and throughout Russia the quantity of deposits increased by a hundred million roubles."[1] What a wonderful confirmation these facts and figures afford of the great blessing of National Temperance![2]

185. Trading with the Enemy.—Two prominent Glasgow iron merchants[3] were charged before Lord

[1] See *The Times* Russian Supplement, April 26, 1915.

[2] The Temperance advocate must beware, however, of making sweeping statements which might be challenged in public. For instance in some districts of the Russian Empire the sale of light beer is not strictly prohibited; and whereas the sale of wine is prohibited in Petrograd, it is freely sold in Tsarkoe Selo and Pavlovsk, and is allowed to be brought from thence into the Capital, while similarly wine is conveyed to Moscow from Kaluga. The prohibition of the sale of vodka throughout the Empire remains, however, a solid rock of stern, beneficent reality. An abundance of interesting facts and figures may be found in a chapter entitled "The Vodka Prohibition" in Stephen Graham's *Russia and the World* (Cassell).

[3] Robert Hetherington and Arnold Wilson, of the firm of William Jacks & Co., Glasgow.

Strathclyde and a Jury at Edinburgh with trading with the enemy. Their offence was that they had supplied about 7,500 tons of iron ore to Messrs. Krupp and other German companies soon after the outbreak of war. They were found guilty,[1] and the Judge sentenced them to six months imprisonment and a fine of £2,000 each. The hearing of their case lasted five days, and the correspondence produced in Court revealed the strange indifference of the accused merchants to the fact that their country was at war. They would have been only too glad to go on supplying iron ore to "our friends Messrs. Krupp," if "the laws of this country" had allowed them to do so. All they appeared anxious about was that not another ton of iron was "to go to any German customer unless we get cash for it." Money—sordid gain at their country's expense—was all they seemed to care about. Although British by birth, they were willing for gain to supply Germany with the materials for slaughtering their own countrymen. There were too many others like them, who escaped detection and conviction.[2]

There are sometimes men who pose in the religious world as Christians. They were baptized in infancy, and they conform outwardly to some

[1] June 18, 1915.

[2] Not so, however, all. Between the outbreak of the war and the end of the year (1914) eighteen offenders were convicted by the Director of Public Prosecutions for trading with the enemy, four being sent to prison and the others fined.

at least of the ordinances and customs of the Church. But there is no real love of Christ or His little ones in their hearts. With them the great thing is to have shares in some concern that pays. It may be the liquor traffic that demoralizes the West African natives, hindering and undoing the work of Christian Missions there; or the vested interests they hold in property or places of amusement or some trading concern, whereby the morals of young people are jeopardized; or else it may be the support they complacently give to schemes of education and philanthropy in which no place is found for the recognition of God and His Christ, and Bible teaching and prayer. These are some of the ways in which these nominal Christians whose hearts have never been really changed by grace do their "trading with the enemy" of God and of human souls. They may escape conviction now; they will not escape in the High Court of Divine Justiciary hereafter.

186. Treachery—under the Cloak of Religion.—Soon after the entrance of Italy into the War, the *Secolo* (of Milan) reported that under the High Altar in Caporetto Parish Church a telegraphic apparatus had been discovered communicating with the enemy. The extraordinary knowledge of Italian artillery movements shown by the enemy, together with the suspicious conduct of the priest-in-charge, pointed to him as the traitor. He was therefore arrested and taken to Udine for Court-Martial. How dreadful to think of a man, claiming

to be a servant of God, using his sacred office and employing the holy things of the sanctuary for the base purposes of treachery and treason! But, as there was a Judas among the twelve Apostles of the Lord, so there will always be men vile enough to use religion as a cloak for selfish and evil projects. In the end their sin will be sure to find them out; and just will be the sentence of their condemnation when they have to stand before the awful throne of Divine Judgment.

187. Trusting—when Anxious.—A wise and loving woman wrote to a friend, telling him of one she dearly loved who was serving at the Front. She described some of his experiences, and spoke of the shadow of anxiety that cast its gloom over everything. And yet she went on to say, that never for a moment had she doubted that he was where duty had clearly called him; and she felt that all was in the hands of God. "It does not do," she said, "to have any dread about one's own treasures."

What a sublime philosophy was that! There is in it a wisdom to which the irreligious heart can never attain. It belongs to the highest order of faith. It is the one sheet-anchor for the heart that loves, when its nearest and dearest are in danger.

> "Peace, perfect peace, with loved ones far away?
> In Jesus' keeping we are safe, and they."

188. Unity—among Christians.—The Rev. Michael Adler was the first Jewish chaplain to

accompany a British force in the field. He held services, consecrated burial-grounds, and ministered to the wounded and the dying. After spending some weeks in France, he returned to England and said: "I should like to put on record my gratitude to two organizations—the Y.M.C.A. and the Red Cross—which have given me every possible help in my work. The Y.M.C.A. put their buildings at my disposal for religious services. I was deeply impressed by the whole-hearted unanimity with which the different religious bodies are working. Church of England, Presbyterian, Methodist—all are as one. . . . All work together in perfect harmony. At the Front there is a fusion of creeds."

Yes; because out there all interests are as one, in the face of a common foe. In the near presence of danger and death, the universal brotherhood of man becomes a reality. They who are fighting in one cause believe there is one God and Father of us all. Many learn to know that there is but One Saviour. Is it too much to hope that the object-lesson, which made so deep an impression on the mind of a religious Jew, will be remembered by Christian England when the War is over?

189. Unity of Christendom.—Dr. Gwynne, Anglican Bishop of Khartum,[1] went to see our troops in Sir John French's army, visiting Rouen among other places. To a relative in England he wrote: "The Archbishop of Rouen was most kind to all

[1] Recently appointed to superintend the Chaplains to our Forces at the Front.

our chaplains, putting at our disposal two of his churches, and giving a reception at which he spoke in the friendliest terms of our Church. The Protestant Pastor also lent us the Temple for service; in fact, there was a real 'Entente Cordiale' between the Churches in this time of common danger."

How delightful to read of such good feeling as that! Peace in the midst of war! The Roman Catholic Archbishop and the Protestant Pastor rivalling one another in the generous hospitality with which they threw open the doors of their churches to the Anglican clergy! There is the spirit of true Christianity, brought out in the face of a common danger. Why is there not more of it always? Surely because in most men, though they be Christians, there is too much of the old sinful nature left; and this blinds their eyes to the right proportion of truths that are vital and opinions which are non-essential. Were the great enemy—Sin—really seen as it is, in all its hideous and loathsome nakedness, then church differences would fade into the background. Some common foundation of agreement (in practice at least, if not in theory) would be found even for the problem of Orders in the Christian Ministry. Is this Utopian? It would not long remain so, if we all complied with two conditions. The one is more prayer—prayer for those who differ from us as well as for ourselves. The other is more love—more of the love of Christ in the hearts of all who call themselves after His name. These two closely combined in holy alliance, would soon prevail in uniting Christian men everywhere.

190. United in the Cause.—On March 20, 1915, the following letter appeared in *The Times*: "Walking home to-day slowly as one does who is 81 in April, I met one of the King's Own Scottish Borderers. I was wearing a plaid of Mackay tartan. I said to the Scot, 'I am an English Borderer by descent; now we all fight for the King.' 'Aye, we do,' said he, and gripped my hand so that it tingled. 'Aye we do. Thank God.'—W. C. SIDGEWICK."

Those two men represented clans that had lived side by side for centuries, and had fought against each other on many a battle-field. But to-day old feuds are forgotten; past quarrellings are buried in the grave of a common sorrow; they have learned the need and the blessing of being united in one righteous Cause and of serving together the one King who claims the loyalty of both.

Would that all Christian Churches and all Christian men could meet one another in the same spirit! If we saw things in their true light, we should forget the controversies which have divided us in the past. We should be so appalled by the terrible nature and universal extent and power of evil in the world, that all true-hearted men would feel they must clasp hands as brothers and together fight against sin.

Those two Borderers did not discard the plaid or tartan of their respective clans. Why should they? Neither wanted the other to do that, while both served the one King.

We can serve Christ our King, and fight side by

side under the banner of His love; and at the same time retain many old distinctions in the outward form and ceremonies of our public Worship. Uniformity in things non-essential should not be pressed. There is too much variety in spiritual taste and sentiment for that. Let us recognize this fact in human nature. To do so will help in making possible our union in Christ before the World.

191. Unprepared.—An American liner, from New York to Liverpool, was getting into English waters. It was just after the *Lusitania* tragedy. The passengers, who had hitherto been light-hearted enough, now began to show signs of anxiety, walking about the decks in silence except for an occasional greeting in undertones. Many were evidently very full of fear. Some were heard to exclaim among themselves, "We're not prepared if anything happens." "Well, get prepared," was the terse advice of someone standing by. The passenger who described the whole voyage, after his safe arrival, said of himself and some friends, "We went to our state-rooms and talked together awhile. We were not afraid. We were ready if anything should happen, and we knelt down and commended ourselves to God, and then turned into bed."

It is a great thing to be always ready for what may happen on the voyage of life. There are people who are among the gayest of the gay when everything seems to be going well and health and prosperity are in the ascendant. But, when anything occurs of a startling nature, they are for a time

full of fears and nervous apprehensions. The thought of death coming on them, as it has come on others, makes them cry out in terror, "We're not prepared, if anything happens."

What better thing than this can we say to them, "Well, get prepared?" The way and means thereto are not hard to find for those who will seek in a spirit of earnestness. And the true Christian friend will always be ready to speak the helpful word—pointing to Jesus the one and only Refuge of the soul, in Whom the sinner may find pardon and so be prepared for the summons whenever it comes.

192. Unwilling Tools.—The French schooner *Diamant* was torpedoed by a German submarine, her crew being allowed two minutes in which to leave her before she was sunk.[1] Her skipper, Captain Ohier, stated that the submarine had suddenly appeared from behind a steamer painted black, which was evidently being used by the enemy as a screen or shelter.

Shortly after this the American barque *Normandy* reported that she had been compelled under threats by a German submarine to stand by and act as a mask for the submarine to sink a Russian merchant vessel.[2] In the case of the *Normandy*

[1] They were afterwards picked up—nine all told—by the Clyde Shipping Company's steamer *Dungeness* and landed at Plymouth.

[2] Commenting on this in an editorial article (July 13, 1915), the *New York Herald* said: "For brazen effrontery

certainly, and perhaps in that of the ship which helped in the destruction of the *Diamant*, we have an instance of unscrupulous men getting innocent men into their power and terrorizing them into becoming the unwilling accomplices of their guilt.

This kind of thing has often been done elsewhere, although under very different surroundings. The annals of criminal law-courts contain many a record of bad men obtaining an ascendancy over others, and compelling them through fear to act as their tools in carrying out some wicked purpose. The *Normandy* was taken unawares and had no chance given of escape, nor was she allowed any choice in the matter. But usually the danger of being entrapped and used for a base purpose can be avoided, if only people will be wise in time. To the young especially and to all susceptible natures we say, "Be careful what friends you make; 'watch and pray' against the fatal risk of drifting along the currents of mis-placed affection or weak good-nature into the power of men who are devoid of Christian principles. You may find, when too late, that they will take a cruel advantage of you, and degrade you under threats into helping them to injure the intended victims of their sinister purposes and schemes."

and brutal impudence the event takes lead of all German offences against our commerce. Nothing like it has ever been known in maritime warfare. To all intents and purposes the *Normandy*, while a prisoner, was made an unwilling party to the destruction of a Russian merchant ship."

193. Warnings—Neglected.—In order to render safe the passage of merchant ships through the North Sea, the Admiralty declared certain areas in these waters to be prohibited for traffic, in consequence of the mines laid there; offering at the same time a safe conduct through the clear channels to all vessels engaged in lawful commerce. A warning was added, that all who neglected this necessary precaution would do so at their own risk, and "would be exposed to the gravest danger from mines."

In direct contravention of this notice and of the instructions of his owners, the master of the Wilson liner *Runo* altered his course and brought his vessel over the enemy's mine-field where she struck a mine and was blown up with the loss of twenty-nine lives. In the Board of Trade Inquiry which followed at Hull,[1] the Court gave Judgment that the loss of the ship was due to his wrongful act, and his certificate was suspended for six months. That man will to his dying day be haunted by the reproach of having caused the deaths of those twenty-nine people (crew and passengers), because he neglected to obey a warning clearly given for his guidance.

In the great highway of life's ocean, there are many hidden dangers concealed by the enemy of human souls. But the warnings against them and the promise of a safe guidance are both fully offered by the "Lover of our souls." The chart for a clear course may be consulted by all on the open pages

[1] January 9, 1915.

of the Bible. Those who refuse to obey the commands of the Lord and to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit do so at their own risk. And a fearful risk that is! It will bring disaster on themselves and on those committed to their care. It may cause the moral and spiritual shipwreck of those whom they love but whom they lead astray. They will be called to account for this on the Day of Judgment hereafter. Unhappy indeed if, through the ages of eternity, they have to endure the remorse of an accusing conscience!

194. Warnings—Unheeded.—For several years before the War broke out, Lord Roberts foresaw the danger and warned the Government and his countrymen—but in vain. They would not believe him when he told them that Germany was our deadly enemy plotting and preparing for our destruction, and that we were a mad people for refusing to see the truth. He got laughed at, and called a scaremonger and fanatic. We have learned lately how foolish we were. We now know that our great soldier, Christian, and patriot was right. And we wish that we had listened to his voice, and as a nation risen to make ready for the struggle for life that is now on us.

It is so in things spiritual and eternal, just as it is in things national and material. When the preacher of to-day, like the prophet of old, tells men of the enmity and hatred of Satan and the power of sin, warning them to repent and prepare for a day of Judgment to come, the great majority

of people do not believe him. They ridicule the idea of a personal Devil; they are sceptical about any future Judgment or Hell; they allow that there may possibly be a Heaven. Many of them will only learn, when too late, that the Bible is true and the preacher they would not heed was a man of wise understanding and faithful speech.

195. Warnings—Withheld.—Among those who hold—or have held—high positions in English political life there are statesmen who must have known, for years before the war broke out, the power of Germany and the designs of her military rulers against our country and others. Indeed some of them have told us that they were aware of the reality and imminence of the danger; but they concealed their knowledge and pooh-poohed men like Lord Roberts who strove to awaken their countrymen to a sense of the peril. They have since endeavoured to explain their former attitude by assuring us that they hoped the menace would not prove real, and they thought it prudent to suppress the ugly truth lest some outburst of popular anger against Germany might precipitate a crisis. It is difficult not to think that the exigencies of party strife and the disproportionate estimate of domestic legislation on party lines obsessed their political outlook, and that over-anxiety about votes at elections dulled their moral vision and blinded them to their country's danger.

In the Ministry of the Church are men whose character is marked by many estimable qualities;

but they are seriously wanting in one thing. They profess to know—and ought to know—the terrible nature of sin, and the menace of Satan and the dread certainty of future punishment. But in their public teaching and preaching they seldom warn their hearers of the danger which threatens the human soul; they have not the courage to show up the ugly side of sin; they preach smooth things, reiterating the platitudes of religion with complacent self-confidence. Far better would it be for themselves and for those whose conscience is lulled to sleep by their smooth sayings, if they had the courage to tell men the real truth boldly, taking their place beside the great Apostle, when he said, "I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God."[1]

196. What will You Say ?—On one of the many posters that appeared, appealing for recruits to the army, was one with this headline,

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO THINK ABOUT.

Among these questions were the following two :—

1. "What will you say in years to come, when people ask you, 'Where did you serve in the Great War ?'"

2. "What will you answer, when your children grow up and say, 'Father, why weren't you a soldier too ?'"

[1] Acts xx. 26, 27; cp. Ezekiel xxxiii. 2–6.

I do not envy those men, young and vigorous to-day, who will not be able then to give a satisfactory reason for having held back now. Unless they can show some good and sufficient cause for not having served their country in her hour of need, they will have to endure with shame the just reproach and merited contempt of others.

There is always an urgent need of men, in the prime and vigour of life, to serve in the ranks of another army, under the Captain of our Salvation, against the forces of sin, with its numerous battalions of crime and selfishness. The call is urgent for this "Imperial Service." But, just as in the Great War among the nations of Europe, thousands of big strong stalwart men have clung to the life of inglorious ease and safety, so do many men of ability and position refuse to respond to the sacred call of duty, often leaving to others, less able than they are, to bear the burden and heat of the day while serving the Lord Christ in the Homeland, or on active service in the Foreign Mission Field. What will they say in future, when "time shall be no more," and they are asked, "Where did you serve in the Great War between Christ and Satan?" And if they have to hang their heads and reply "Nowhere"; then will follow the other question too, "Why weren't you a soldier in a Cause so glorious, under whose standard you were enlisted, when, in your Baptism you were sealed with the sign of the Cross?" Oh, let there be no longer any holding back on the part of such. Better is it to give up all, and if need be to die in such a service, than to live

unworthily and hereafter to merit the condemnation of saints and angels.

197. Wireless—A Secret.—I have read that in the British Navy there is a unique secret by which "wireless" messages can be sent and received without the smallest chance of interception. In the ordinary way the vibrations of any "wave length" can be read by the instrument that is tuned to detect them; even cyphers can be interpreted (or decyphered) by the enemy. But this secret is impenetrable. On certain occasions, from all the wireless apparatus of all the ships in the Grand Fleet, every manner of confused message is sent forth, producing a tumult of vibrations which are chaotic and untranslatable. The operators along the coast who hear it nightly call it "The Brass Band!" No enemy can understand or pick up a single message out of this babel of sound. But at the Central Receiving Station of the Admiralty there is an instrument, superlatively sensitive and inviolably secret, by means of which directions are issued and information transmitted of incalculable import. For those who have the requisite ear and the proper touch there is between the Admiralty and the Fleet calm symphony of communication through the welter of discord. This has well been called "a miracle of science" in modern discovery.

Not only in modern times, but from the very earliest ages of man's existence, a miracle of grace has been wrought unceasingly. There is a wonderful secret known and understood more or less clearly

by those who hold communion in prayer with the Lord Who reigneth on high. Amidst the din and strife and confusion of human passions and earthly interests that clash, they can hear the sound of "a still small voice" with its clear notes of warning and comfort and peace. The cultivated spiritual sense or faculty can understand and interpret what is said to each one, for the soul of the believer becomes like a sensitive instrument, able to receive, through the gracious mediation of the Holy Spirit, the messages of love and providence and guidance that come from our Father in Heaven. And He can hear and understand every desire and wish and longing for pardon, peace and protection which ascend to His listening ear from the hearts of His children on earth. I do not say that the enemy of souls neither hears nor understands anything of this; but we may rest assured that he cannot hinder the messages in transmission, nor can he vitiate or turn to base account the prayer of any humble soul.

Like Nehemiah of old, when he stood in the presence of a heathen king and breathed his silent prayer to the God of Heaven, so may we, unknown to and unhindered by a callous and unsympathetic world around, hold sweet communion with the God of our life, and share in the bright secret of His revealed will.

198. Wisdom towards Outsiders.[1]—A chaplain at the Front wrote home: "A few days ago I visited an encampment of Sikhs, with whom I conversed by the help of an interpreter. On leaving

[1] Cp. No. 152.

them I said: 'You worship the one God, do you not?' 'Yes,' was the reply. I then said: 'He is the same God as our God. May He bless and guard you as well as us!' As the interpreter communicated this message to them, their faces kindled, and a low murmur of satisfaction ran through the group; and as I turned to ride away, they lifted up a strange cry, rising high and sinking low, of salutation and farewell."

It is sometimes difficult for the Christian, in his intercourse with those of another creed, to know how to act and speak, so as to be faithful to His Master, and at the same time not to repel those whom he longs to help by saying anything which would evoke resentment and hostility. That English chaplain did the right thing. He appealed to the religious instinct which he knew existed in the hearts and consciences of those Sikhs. And he took them with him, as far as he and they could both travel together, in recognizing one supreme God and Father of us all. It was only one step; but it was in the right direction. And one step at a time is usually the rate of a soul's progress towards finding God in Christ.

199. A Wise Man.—"A medical officer, who called himself a Calvinistic Presbyterian, asked before going to the Front for a crucifix, because he felt that it would be a comfort to any dying men around him, as he himself could not say the right thing to solace a departing soul in directing his thoughts towards the Crucified Redeemer."

These are the words of a chaplain to the forces, whose work lay among the troops training at home for the War.

To many of us the use of a Crucifix is very questionable. It seems to be almost if not quite a violation of the Second Commandment with its prohibition against image-worship. Its misuse, we believe, has done much harm in substituting material for spiritual adoration and so obscuring the spiritual vision.

But in the case of this medical officer, the circumstances were quite exceptional. He was a man of deep religious convictions; he longed to help any who, in their hour of need, might want some simple way of access to the Saviour. On the battle-field, or in the trenches, with guns roaring and shells bursting around, speech would be almost impossible. Then to the gaze of some poor dying soldier the Crucifix would—like the brazen serpent of old to Israel in the wilderness—convey a message, clear, simple and comforting. It would be just the very thing needed to tell the anxious soul of the way whereby sins are forgiven, and reconciliation made with God. It would seem to say, in the words of a sweet old hymn,

> "There is life in a look at the Crucified One,
> There is life at this moment for thee."

200. Woman's Privilege.—Among the pictures which attracted a large amount of attention in the Royal Academy this year was one[1] entitled "Wounded: London Hospital, 1915."

[1] By John Lavery, A.

There is the ward with its line of beds on either side, filled with wounded men from the Front. In the distance a doctor stands talking to one of the sisters. A soldier whose leg has been amputated is walking on crutches. But our attention is focussed almost exclusively on two figures in the foreground—a nurse, and a young soldier wearing the uniform of a Scottish regiment. He is not badly wounded, and is sitting in a chair, with his right arm bared for the nurse to dress a wound. Into the face of each the artist has put an expression full of feeling and character. The soldier looks as though he is thinking of the awful scenes he has witnessed on the battle-field ; as though his brief experience of the horrors of war has been to him a terrible revelation. His wound is slight ; he has but tasted the cup of pain and suffering ; but he looks as though he knows what the full draught must be like.

The nurse is not very young, nor is she at all pretty ; but she has such a good face—strong, thoughtful, tender, full of yearning pity and sympathy, as she leans over the soldier-lad.

These two became to me a parable, as I thought of them. Into the battle-field of life the young man goes to fight his way in the name and for the sake of right and duty. He soon obtains an insight into the " frightfulness " of sin, with all its cruelty and selfishness and terrible temptations. He does not come out of the conflict unscarred. Happy is he, if the wounds he receives are but slight. Yet (if his heart is still sound) never can he forget the awful vision he has had of Satanic devices and the human

misery they produce. For him there is one place best of all on earth—that hospital for wounded souls—a home of love. And that home will only be complete for him, if there is in it a woman's heart to which he can fully trust himself. She may be his mother, or his sister, or someone dearer still. But that is what he needs, to put him on his feet again, when he has fallen. If her beauty is that of character more than outward form, of soul rather than features of face, then let him thank God for such an anchor in distress, such a shelter from the storm, such a sanctuary when he needs rest and peace.

201. The Woman's Share.—"Every man who goes out to the national trial and testing and battle has a woman behind him. His eyes turn to his especial Mecca. Every day in the face of danger he is learning reality about himself and life, and he is writing it daily in letters, writing what he can of it. Women are fighting this War as much as men. The mother who bare the man stirs in his limbs. The girl he loves is one with him whether he live or die. Thousands have had to find that truth for themselves in this War."—STEPHEN GRAHAM.

He is a wise man who makes sure that he has a good woman behind him, whether he be a soldier serving in this War, or a civilian fighting the battles of ordinary life when peace reigns again.

And let each woman—whether mother, or sister, wife or sweetheart—try to be worthy of the sacred trust reposed in her. Let her faith in God be

strong; and let her prayers be very real, very constant, very earnest; so that neither faith nor prayer fail on behalf of the man who counts on her for both.

202. Worthy—in our Day.—During the Autumn and Winter months (1914–15), the Canadians who had come over to England were in training on Salisbury Plain. As they read the story or heard from other lips of the brave deeds of British troops already in the field, they expressed their pride and admiration in ungrudging terms. The retreat from Mons, the stemming of the tide of German onslaught, and the heroism whereby the enemy was held along the Yser—all these exploits made the young Colonials' blood tingle with a desire to render themselves worthy of the traditions of the Old Country. They did not boast or brag of what they were going to do. On the contrary, many amongst them, when they finally went out to the Front, were nervous lest they should not reach the same high standard of courage and endurance. One single thought was uppermost in their minds; one ambition found utterance on their lips—namely, that, when they were put to the test, they too might be found worthy, that they might uphold the name and character of their race. We know how they did this. Of all the great achievements and deeds of heroism in France and Flanders, none has thrilled the Empire with more pride and admiration than the magnificent stand these young Canadians made at Ypres. In the face of overwhelming numbers, and battling against the deadly fumes of poisonous gas, they "saved the

situation" on that critical day. We sorely needed their help for King and country; and they nobly responded.

When this war is over, another war will still be waged—the war that never ceases between good and evil, between truth and falsehood in the world. As time goes on, the enemy of Christ and His Church developes new methods of attack, using the modern weapons of "science falsely so called," to undermine the faith of the ages.

We need the help of the young generation growing up to-day. Who among them will respond to the call? How many of them are there whose hearts beat true to the message of the old Gospel—that wonderful story of God's redeeming love, through Christ our Lord? May the convictions they hold be strong; the faith they profess a living force; and let their one ambition be to prove themselves worthy of their spiritual heritage in Christ their Saviour and ours.

203. Zeal—Evoked by Influence.—From the parish of St. Michael's, Sittingbourne, there went out on active service its only curate, the organist, sixteen choirmen and eight bell-ringers. What a splendid instance of patriotic ardour was there! Those men realized their country's need; they were alive to the sense of her danger, and responded nobly to the call of duty. Had the same enthusiasm and consciousness of England's need prevailed everywhere throughout the country, how much more quickly would victory on the side of the Allies have brought the War to a successful end!

It is just that same spirit that we want to see in every church and parish throughout the land, enlisted on behalf of the great Missionary Cause so dear to the heart of our Risen Lord. Nor is it too much to say that if all Christian communities were fired with a similar spirit of enthusiasm for this world-wide enterprise, the nations now sitting in darkness would speedily see a great light, and the way would be made ready for the Saviour's promised return.

Why is this not done? Where must we look (on the human side that is) for the secret of success? Just in the same direction from which those men of Kent drew their inspiration. Their Vicar, the Rev. A. B. Parry Evans (the "Bargemen's Bishop" as he is called), is a man full of zeal, and devotion to his duty, and love for his fellow-men. Wherever the same lofty spirit is shown in the life and teaching of an earnest clergyman, there will be plenty of people to follow and to obey the call for self-sacrifice. But so long as that is wanting in any church or parish, who can wonder if apathy prevails? Fire is contagious. If it burn in the pulpit, it cannot but spread to the pews. And that is one great want of the Church to-day.

204. A Zealous Patriot.—After the suppression of Maritz' rebellion and the conquest of German South-West Africa, a banquet was given (July 24, 1915) by the citizens of Cape Town in honour of General Botha. The hero of the evening made an

historic speech, in which he revealed things which had come to his certain knowledge about the treacherous designs of Germany for years past on the Union. He also exposed the ruthless cruelty and atrocities perpetrated by the Germans against the natives of Damaraland. So convinced was he of the righteousness of Great Britain as the champion of humanity and freedom—so sure of his own attitude and of the part he had already taken against the Germans, that he closed his speech by saying, "Thank God, their designs have been frustrated, . . . And, as far as I am concerned, if I stand alone, I am going to continue in the policy that I have pursued."[1]

Every Christian man, who realizes the hatefulness of sin and the beauty of holiness will take his stand firmly on the side of the truth entrusted by God to His Church on earth. Like Athanasius of old and the lion-hearted Botha of our day, he will be prepared to say, "If needful I stand alone; nothing shall move me from the course I know to be right." Strong convictions only can move a man to speak such words and to take such a stand. They who do so are the men whom Satan fears and hates; but whom God loves and will honour in the great Day of his appearing.

205. Zeppelins.—By the inventive genius of a famous engineer, the plans of a wonderful airship were conceived and drawn. By the highest

[1] *The Times*, July 26, 1915.

mechanical skill in the land, its engines and huge envelope were constructed in a great shed somewhere in Germany. With its full equipment of daring men and explosive bombs this mighty aerial monster sallied forth one fine Sunday evening early in June, 1915. We do not know with any degree of certainty what was its course or what were its achievements during the summer night which followed. But on that night a Zeppelin did sail proudly along the East Coast of England, and dropped its incendiary bombs on more than one town, destroying valuable property and killing a number of men, women and children. There are good reasons for believing it to be the same. In triumph it turned homewards; but on the way there, early on the Monday morning, it was sighted near Ghent by a British monoplane. Single-handed, the brave aviator [1] attacked the huge monster, flew over it, and from above dropped bombs, one of which exploded, set the Zeppelin on fire, and brought it to the ground a smoking heap of ruins. This was the conclusion of that proud enterprise.

By the perverted genius of human intellect in German Universities, a system of rationalism was propounded, openly antagonistic to the supernatural in religion, and avowedly destructive of Divine inspiration and revelation. Its main object became the glorification of German Kultur. In the Military

[1] Flight Sub-Lieut. Warneford. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for his conspicious bravery in this remarkable feat. Unfortunately he was killed in an accident while flying, on June 27, at the Buc Ærodrome, Paris. He was in his twenty-third year.

schools of Prussian ambition it became forged by ruthless hands into a scientific materialism. On the eve of August, 1914, as the mightiest war-machine ever known, it was launched against the civilized nations. The world has gazed with horror at its course of ruthless destruction, its defiance of the laws of God and of all humane feelings and principles. What shall be its end? When will the hour of its downfall strike? These are questions whose answer the future alone can fully reveal. But let no one be afraid, or have any doubt as to its final doom. In His own way and in His own time God will humble all human pride, of nations and individuals alike. Arrogant pretensions and selfish ambitions, however cleverly conceived or treacherously prosecuted, shall fall to the ground; and great shall be their ruin.

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